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THE  
S T O R Y  
OF  
L I L L Y   D A W S O N.

BY  
MRS. CROWE,  
AUTHOR OF  
"THE ADVENTURES OF SUSAN HOPLEY," ETC.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

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# LILLY DAWSON.

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## CHAPTER I.

LILLY'S FLIGHT, AND WHITHER IT CONDUCTS HER.

LAMENTABLE as was the spectacle of the murdered woman on the bed, Lilly was naturally too much alarmed for her own safety, and too anxious to provide for it, to spend much time in bewailing the fate of Charlotte Littenhans. She did not doubt that if she were discovered there, she should share the same fate as her cousin, being now doubly obnoxious from the possession of so fatal a secret.



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buttoned closely up to his chin, as if to conceal the want of other habiliments.

As the opening of the door threw a flood of light upon the stair, these two early risers saw each other distinctly; and one seemed almost as much surprised and startled as the other. As for Lilly, her limbs gave way under her, and she was ready to sink into the earth, as she suddenly arrested her steps, uncertain whether to go backwards or forwards, and with pale cheeks, and white lips, and eyes expressive of the greatest terror, she stood staring at the man; who apparently equally irresolute whether to retreat or advance, stood also still with the door in his hand. However, seeing she did not stir, he made the first move, passed her, and descended, having carefully closed the door of the room he came out of; and after a moment's pause she followed him. It was clear, whoever he might be, he had no intention of impeding her escape. Indeed, he facilitated it considerably by opening the front door, out of which,

without any further obstacle, she stepped after him into the street; up which he strode with great rapidity, never once, to her great satisfaction, turning his head to observe what course she took, which was the opposite one to his, for no other reason than that it was so; for she did not know in what part of the town she was; nor if she had known, could she have easily decided whither to direct her steps. Not to her former home, for there was May, who had betrayed her into the hands of her enemy; not to Mrs. Knox's, for there was May likewise. Nor to Mrs. Ryland, for she believed the old woman was no longer her friend; not to Philip—her soul recoiled from that; for he loved May, and would never conceal Lilly from her, nor be induced to believe her guilty of such cruel treachery. So she formed no plan, but that of getting as far from the scene of these horrors as possible; and fled forward as fast as her trembling limbs could take her, without knowing in what direction she was going.

Few people were yet about the streets, and they were such as cared little to notice her. They had most of them enough of their own to look to, so that she walked on unmolested through the wretched neighbourhood of squalor and poverty in which she had passed the night, till she found herself approaching a better part of the town, and presently she saw the river, which she crossed by Blackfriars Bridge. And now that the pressing danger was over, and she could venture to believe herself somewhat secure from the immediate peril of being overtaken and caught by Luke, she found time to be anxious about the future. And she slackened her pace from the consciousness that she had nowhere to go to, and looked anxiously in women's faces for pity and sympathy. And she might have won both if they could have read her story in her mild eyes. No money, no friend, no home ! No roof under which she could claim shelter in all that large city ! What a deso-

lation it was ! But still she walked on till she reached a place where the houses were less crowded together, and some had little gardens before them. There was something both cheery and sad to her in the appearance of these ; for she had not seen such since her happy journey with Abel White, the dear, blind old man, never forgotten even in her happiest moments, and to whom she would long ago have written had she known how. But though her small stock of reading was somewhat improved, writing was an accomplishment she had neither had time nor opportunity to acquire.

It was still so early, that the shutters of most of the houses were yet closed ; but there was one whose inhabitants seemed to be more alert. The lower windows were open, and a busy housemaid was seen bustling about the little parlour. Just as Lilly was passing, the door opened, and she came out for the purpose of shaking the hearth rug in the

garden. As the sound had caused Lilly to turn her head in that direction, the two girls' eyes met, and they recognised each other.

"My ! Lilly, is it you ?" exclaimed Winny. "Well, better late than never, to be sure. I thought you never meant to come and see me at all. But, oh gracious ! how ill you look ! What *is* the matter ?"

"I didn't know where you lived before," replied Lilly, evading the question.

"Well, but you've got a tongue in your head, and you might have asked. I should have come to see you long ago if I could have got time ; but there's been a deal of trouble here, and now we're worse off than ever, so if you hadn't come I don't know when I could have got so far. But come in and sit down, do. I'm sure you must be fine and tired with such an early walk."

Lilly was fine and tired ; not with the dis-

tance she had walked, but with anxiety, and, as she knew that Winny was no friend of Luke's, she thought she might venture to accept her invitation.

"And as soon as I've got a bit on with my work," continued Winny, "I'll get a cup of tea and a bit of breakfast for you; but I'm just over head and ears, for the girl we had to help is gone all of a sudden, and missus has not got any body in her place; so every thing's on my shoulders. That's the way I was up so early, for I've got their breakfast to get and every thing."

"Can I help you?" inquired Lilly.

"Well, if you're not too tired," returned Winny, "and I shall be sooner able to get you a cup of tea. If you'll finish this room, I'll go and set their breakfast things." So Lilly set to work at her old trade, and rubbed, and dusted, as she used to do at the "Black Huntsman."

She was still busy, when a fine boy, about



twelve years of age, came down from above; in his shirt and trousers, and entering the room, with his waistcoat in his hand, said, "I say, Winny, I wish you'd just mend this hole in my waistcoat, will you? Oh! it's not Winny," he added, perceiving his mistake. "What, are you the new servant?" Well, *you* can do it, can't you?"

"Yes, sir, if I had a needle and thread," replied Lilly. "I'll go and ask Winny for one."

"Stop!" said he, "I'll fetch mamma's work-box, I know where it is," and presently he appeared with the box in his hand, and Lilly, helping herself to what she wanted, commenced repairing the damaged waistcoat, which was, however, in rather a dilapidated condition at the best.

"Mend it so that it can't be seen, will you?" said the boy, with some anxiety in his countenance, and Lilly did her best to conform to his wishes; whilst he, apparently attaching

great importance to the operation, frequently rose and looked over her shoulder at the work.

"Thankye," said he, taking it from her and examining it when it was done; "that's better than Peggy used to do it," and seemingly relieved by the neatness of the performance, he skipped lightly upstairs again.

"That's Mister Fred, what's he been down for?" inquired Winny, who just then ascended from the kitchen.

"He wanted a hole in his waistcoat mended, and asked me to do it," replied Lilly.

"I'm glad he did," answered Winny; "for I'm not over handy with my needle. Peggy, the girl that's gone, did the mending. But now come below, and we'll have a bit of breakfast before they come down stairs. Well, and how's that good Miss Elliott?" continued Winny, as she poured out a cup of tea for her visitor.

"May's very well," answered Lilly, with

a shudder, for that name suggested the memory of the cruel treachery which the horrors of the night, and the events of the morning, had somewhat banished from her recollection.

“But, lauk! Lilly, now I come to look at you again, you do look shocking ill?” exclaimed Winny; for, in fact, Lilly’s face was blanched with the terrors and sufferings she had endured for so many hours, though the surprise of meeting with Winny, at so critical a juncture, had at first brought a little blood to her cheeks. “What’s the matter?” said she; “has any thing happened?” for the subject was too much for Lilly’s shaken nerves, and she burst into tears. “You haven’t been having words with Miss Elliott, have you?”

But Lilly wept on, unable to answer; and her tears having once opened their sluices, poured down with a violence that quite alarmed poor Winny.

"What in the name of fortune *has* happened?" said she.

"I don't live with May now," answered Lilly, at length, speaking convulsively. "She's going into handsomer lodgings, and I ——," and here she stopped; for she felt she could not narrate the events of the night; which, now that she was seated in this small, tidy kitchen, with the kettle singing on the fire, and the tea-things on the table, and Winny Weston opposite to her, seemed more like a horrid dream than a reality. There appeared to her something in the scene she had witnessed too awful and terrific to be made the subject of discourse. She could not have trusted her lips to tell it to any body but Abel White; he alone, with his sightless eyes and venerable face, seemed a fit confidant for such a tale. Then, the idea that the murderer was her own cousin, helped also to keep her silent. She shrank from bringing such an accusation against one that belonged to her, odious as he was; and

she knew very well that at the smallest hint of such a thing, Winny would seize on the idea with avidity; and, perhaps, repeat the tale to others, and Heaven knows what might follow! She might even, through such means, be traced by Luke, and fall again into his hands; whilst all she desired was to be permitted to gain her living in safety and obscurity; for retribution or revenge she had no desire—indeed, the idea of either never occurred to her. Moreover, she did not wish to say a word to Winny about Philip; that was too painful a subject. She could not have told how her friend had betrayed her, and seduced her lover; nor have conveyed to any one else the grounds she had for believing he *had* been her lover, till he was captivated by the too seducing May. Altogether, poor Lilly could not tell her story; she could only weep, and allow Winny to draw her own conclusions, and compose a story after her own fashion; which she did.

"I see how it is," said she, "you've been having words with Miss Elliott, and perhaps she's got you out of Mrs. Knox's."

"I shouldn't like to go back to Mrs. Knox's," said Lilly.

"But can't you make friends, again?" inquired Winny. "If I'd time, I'd go and speak to her and tell her how sorry you are."

"No," said Lilly, confirmed in her determination of keeping her late adventure secret, "you mustn't; it would only make it worse. Besides, I don't wish to make it up, and I don't mean to go to Mrs. Knox's any more."

"Then, what in the world do you mean to do?" inquired Winny.

"I don't know," said Lilly, "I'd get a place if I could!"

"There's the parlour-bell for breakfast!" said Winny, rising and rushing up stairs with the tea-kettle.

"See, ma," said Frederick, when they met in the dining-room, "how nicely the new maid has mended my waistcoat. I'm so glad

she can sew better than Peggy—Peggy always made such a botch when I asked her to mend my things, I was ashamed to go to school with it. Look, ma, isn't it?"

"Yes, dear boy," answered Mrs. Adams, "Winny seems to have put her best workmanship into it, for she's generally very awkward with her needle. I think much worse than Peggy was!"

"It isn't Winny that did it, mamma!" replied Frederick, "it was the new maid. I don't know what her name is."

"What new maid? We have no new maid, my dear," replied Mrs. Adams.

"There was a new maid doing the parlour!" said Fred.

"It must be some friend of Winny's that she's got to help her, then!" said Mrs. Adams.

"I'll ask her!" said Fred.; and as soon as Winny appeared with the kettle, he put the question.

"She's a young woman from the place I

come from," said Winny, "that called to see me ; and finding me busy, she just put her hand to the dusting."

"Is she in service?" inquired Mrs. Adams.

"Not at present, ma'am ; she's out of place," replied Winny.

"And is she a respectable person?"

"Oh, yes, there can't be one more respectabler. I've known her since she was that high, when she was living at home with her friends," returned Winny, holding her hand a yard from the floor.

"Then, perhaps, you might keep her here to help you a few days, till we get a servant," suggested Mrs. Adams. "Would she have any objection, do you think?"

"Not she, ma'am," answered Winny, who had been framing her answers expressly to attain this result. "She's the good temperedest girl ever I saw ; and uncommon handy at her needle!"

"That she is !" said Fred., looking down



at his waistcoat with complacency ; " Ecce signum ! "

And as Lilly accepted the offer, she was immediately installed as Winny's assistant, *pro tempore* ; and Winny being forthwith despatched into the neighbourhood to fetch a bit of mutton to make some broth, her first service was to carry up Colonel Adams's breakfast, who being an invalid, had not yet risen ; Frederick accompanying her to show her the way.

It was a small house, with just two apartments on a floor, and he lay in the back drawing-room.

" Here's your breakfast, pa," said Fred., and we've got a new maid ! "

" Already ! " said Colonel Adams, " where did you get her ? "

" She came to see Winny ; she's a friend of Winny's and came from her country ; they've known each other ever since they were little ; haven't you, Lilly ? "

"Yes, sir!"

"Lilly!" echoed Colonel Adams, "is that her name?"

"Yes; Lilly—Lilly, what is it?" said Fred.

"Lilly Dawson, sir."

"Lilly Dawson—ah!" said Colonel Adams, with a sigh.

"Put the tray down here, Lilly," said Frederick, "and fetch pa's dressing-gown off that chair; and now you may go down, Lilly, and I'll call you to take away the things when pa's done. Isn't Lilly a pretty name, pa?" said Fred., "and she's like a lily; she's so white, poor thing! I never saw any body so white in my life. If she wasn't so white, she'd be very pretty."

"But has your mamma any character with her?" inquired the Colonel.

"Oh, Winny knows her very well, and all her friends; and I believe they're very respectable people indeed," answered Fred., unconsciously betrayed into a little exag-

generation in his enthusiasm for Lilly; who had entirely won his heart by her dexterous darning. "And you can't think how nicely she does needle-work! She mended my waistcoat this morning, so that you can hardly see the place; and Peggy used to make such a botch, that I couldn't bear going to school with it."

"Is your waistcoat much worn?" inquired Colonel Adams.

"Oh, yes, pa; it's so shabby you can't think. Feel! there's a darn—and there's a darn—they're Peggy's. This is the one Lilly did; and you can hardly feel it."

"You must have a new waistcoat," said the father.

"But my jacket's almost as bad, pa; and my trousers, they're very bad indeed. There isn't one of the boys has such shabby clothes as I have; and they do quiz me so!—the ill-natured ones do."

"You must have new ones," said Colonel

Adams gravely, whilst a spasm contracted his features for an instant.

Colonel Adams had been for some time in ill-health. He had first had a severe illness; and then a series of indispositions which had been both very painful and very expensive, reducing more and more his already reduced means; and he had now a malady in his eyes, which threatened him with blindness, if not taken great care of, and incapacitated him from bearing the light. He was, therefore, kept with his eyes shaded in a nearly dark room; whilst one member of the family, or the other, generally remained with him; Frederick or his mother when they could; if not, one of the maids. And it was on this account, they were obliged to keep two, which was more than their means well sufficed for. When he was taken into a light room, his eyes were entirely darkened; so that the dilapidations of poor Frederick's wardrobe, as well as many other matters, escaped his observation.

## CHAPTER II.

HOW MAY ELLIOTT PLAYS A DESPERATE GAME WITH  
HER OWN HAPPINESS.

It is an undoubted fact, that apart from a positive disposition to dishonesty, there are many persons in the world, who have an entire incapacity for all pecuniary affairs. They are unable to calculate what money will do, and disliking poverty and privation as much as their neighbours, they are sure to run themselves headlong into both.

May Elliott was one of this class. In the commencement of her independent career she had no deliberate design of defrauding any body; but the incapacity above alluded to, caused her to be always in ad-

vance of her salary; and as she had as little genius for self-denial as for arithmetic, she soon got into difficulties, which her principles were too unstable to battle with; and from being imprudent she became dishonest. This is the gently inclined-plane down which many a better nature than May Elliott's annually slides to perdition; a descent at once so easy and so fatal, that the first step towards it cannot be too carefully avoided. On the strength of Mr. Cropley's twenty pounds, and the extravagant hopes she built on his vague promises, together with a small increase of her salary, May had taken lodgings in Blenheim Street, to which she removed as soon as she had got rid of Lilly. She was influenced to this step by various motives. The desire to shake off Lilly without the odium of turning her out of doors, was one; her own pride and ambition furnished another; and her anxiety to dazzle Philip's eyes, and maintain her conquest over his heart, supplied a third.

A woman who has won the love of an honest, upright man, which she is conscious she does not deserve, is in the situation of a false gamester, playing with clogged dice; her success may be as transitory as it is rapid; and when she is detected she is lost. May's own instincts told her that Philip's love for her was a delusion. She was fully aware of the influence that her fashionable dress and factitious airs of fine-ladyism had on the mind of this inexperienced provincial Adonis; and in her anxiety to sustain and quicken his infatuation, she thought the style and situation of her residence not unimportant, and she was not altogether mistaken. Besides, she knew how to derive a double advantage from her new lodging, by shedding a grace over her motive for remaining in the old.

"What a nice lodging, and how beautifully it is furnished!" exclaimed Philip, whose taste in the matter of furniture had not been much cultivated.

"Do you think so?" answered May, care-

lessly, throwing her eye round the apartment, as if, after all, she thought it somewhat inadequate to her pretensions.

"It's a great deal nicer than the other," replied Philip, on whom her affected indifference had exactly the effect she desired; that is, it exalted his conception of her standard of excellence.

"Oh, yes," returned May, with a contemptuous little laugh; "I hope so! That was a horrid hole! I should never have lived there, you know, but for a particular reason."

"What reason?" inquired Philip. "To be near Mrs. Knox's?"

"Why, Lilly Dawson to be sure!" said May. "Of course you know two people's living is more expensive than one—it makes a great difference, I assure you! and as Lilly isn't clever at all, her salary was next to nothing."



"Poor Lilly!" said Philip, "what is she going to do? Has she left Mrs. Knox?"

"Oh, yes," replied May, drily, "she has left Mrs. Knox; but what she's going to do is more than I know; only I should not be surprised if I heard of her being married!"

"Married!" exclaimed Philip, looking seriously astonished.

"Oh, I don't wish to make you uneasy," said May. "I didn't know you cared whether she was married or single."

"I don't care whether any body in the world is married or single, except one person," replied Philip; "but I am surprised, for I didn't know that Lilly had any acquaintance amongst young men."

"Well, we shall see," returned May; "time will show. I never pry into other people's secrets. I did all I could for Lilly Dawson, for I am sure I don't know what would have become of her if I had not stood her friend when I did; but, of course,

people must do as they like, you know. I am the last person to interfere in any body's affairs ; I've enough to do with my own."

"I always thought Lilly was very grateful," said Philip.

"Oh, I don't say she was not," returned May ; "but Lilly has a will and a way of her own, like other people."

"I am sure she had cause to be grateful to you," said Philip ; "for even by her own account, you've been a good friend to her. I'm sure, when first she used to come and see us, she couldn't say enough of it."

"Oh, yes, I dare say," returned May ; "talking's easy, you know."

"But *has* Lilly behaved ungratefully to you ?" asked Philip, finding a real difficulty in believing his old friend capable of what appeared so entirely inconsistent with all he had observed of her.

"I don't say she *has*," replied May as if either caution or generosity prevented her

speaking out. "Lilly knows her own ways best ; and I only hope she mayn't be worse off than she has been."

"I can only say, if she *has* been ungrateful, she deserves all she may meet with," returned Philip. "I should have very little pity for any body that could be ungrateful to you, May ; you, that are so kind and good to every body."

"And pray, sir, how do *you* know I am kind and good to every body ?"

"Why, you were kind and good to Lilly ; and I'm sure you're kind and good to *me*."

"To *you* !—ah ! more fool I."

"Don't say that, May ; *I'll* never be ungrateful, depend upon it."

"Ah, all men say that. Promises are like pie-crust, you know."

"I don't know whether all men say it, May ; but I say it, and mean it, too. If you don't believe me, you had better cast me off, at once, and have nothing more to say to me."

"And suppose I do," said May, "what would you do then?"

"Die," returned Philip, with an air of deep conviction. "I am certain I couldn't survive it."

"Pooh!" said May, "not you. You'd get another mistress in six weeks."

"You must have a very poor opinion of me, Miss Elliott," said Philip, really shocked, and half offended at the insinuation. "If that is the sort of person you think me, I am surprised you should have any thing to say to me."

"I dare say you are," returned May, with mock gravity.

"I only know *I* wouldn't have any thing to say to a person I had such a bad opinion of," rejoined Philip.

"But you can't expect every body to be as wise as you are, you know, Mr. Philip Ryland. You're a man, and I'm only a poor weak woman."

"You're an angel," exclaimed Philip, in a fit of gratitude and enthusiasm. "But tell me, May, have you such a bad opinion of me?"

"If I had such a bad opinion of you, do you think I should be so foolish as to care for you?"

"Then you own you do care for me, May?"

"Perhaps—a little."

"Is it only a little, May?"

"There, now; that's the way with men; they're always so unreasonable. Now, just tell me, Mr. Philip Ryland—"

"Don't call me *Mr. Philip Ryland*, May; I can't bear it."

"Why, didn't you call me *Miss Elliott*, just now?"

"Oh, well, never mind what I say. I'm a fool."

"Well, it's a good thing for people to know themselves. But just tell me whether, four

months ago, you wouldn't have thought yourself a very lucky fellow if I had told you I cared for you?"

"Should I? to be sure I should. I couldn't believe it at first; and sometimes I can't believe it now. I can't think what you see in me, I'm sure!"

"I can't think either," said May, with an accent of *espièglerie*, and an arch glance of the eye; "and yet you see you're such an ungrateful monster, that you're not satisfied, though you own you've got more than you ever expected, and a *great deal* more than you deserve."

"Ah! May, but you see as people get on they're always wanting more and more; when we've got one thing, we want another. At first I could hardly believe that you could ever think of such a fellow as I am."

"Well, now what sort of fellow do you think you are?" inquired May.

"Why, to say the truth," returned Philip,

"I had never thought about myself at all, till I knew you. I had never been in the way of knowing any girl but Lilly——"

"Oh, Lilly!" echoed May, contemptuously; "Lilly knows as much about a man, as about the figure on the top of the Monument."

"But then, when I did know you, and when I began to love you, I said to myself how can the beautiful, elegant Miss Elliott ever think of looking at an awkward cub like me."

"Oh, so you think you're an awkward cub, do you?"

"I'm afraid so, May."

"Ah! ah!" laughed May, joyously.

"Why, don't *you* think so, May?"

"Oh, to be sure I do; you wouldn't have me differ in opinion with you, would you? I never contradict gentlemen."

"Then you do really think me an awkward cub?" said Philip, a little mortified that she did *not* contradict him.

"Now, suppose I was to tell you what I really do think of you," said May; "might not it do you a great deal of harm? Men can't bear praise—they're so shockingly prone to vanity."

"I hope not," replied Philip; "I'm sure I care very little what any body thinks of me, but you."

"Well, then, suppose I was to tell you that I think you a very nice, handsome young man?"

"Oh! handsome," said Philip, blushing like a girl; "I know I'm not handsome."

"Hold your tongue, sir, and don't interrupt me. A very nice, handsome young man—only——"

"Only what?" said Philip, anxiously.

"I shan't tell you," said May; "it's no use—you can't help it."

"What is it?" said Philip, colouring, and getting quite uneasy; "do tell me,



May, and I'll try and mend it, whatever it is."

"You can't, Philip; I wish you could, for it's a great fault in a man, especially a young one," said she, with a sigh *obligato*; "but men can't bear to be told of their faults."

"Tell me what it is," said Philip, earnestly, "and I swear I'll cure myself of it, or die."

"Why should I tell you of your faults?" said she, "they never can be any thing to me, you know."

"Indeed!" said Philip, "I thought they might have been something to you one day or other."

"No," replied May, in a subdued tone, and looking down at her work, "no, Philip, I am afraid you and I should never do together."

"Why, May?—for God's sake tell me why?" exclaimed Philip, getting quite excited. "You never said this before. What

have I done? Is it this fault that you have found out in me?"

"Oh! I haven't found it out at all," said May, "it don't require finding out—any body may see it with half an eye."

"Then you own it *is* that, that makes you think we couldn't do together? What is it? I'll tell you what, May, if you won't tell me, I'll go away, and you shall never see me again. I'll leave London at once, and go back to the country. My mother's wishing to go, and it's no use my staying in a place where I see nothing but misery before me; and, indeed, I dare say it's the best thing I can do; and it will be the best thing for you, too; for then you'll be rid of me and my faults, too."

"There, now! Didn't I tell you you couldn't bear to be told of your faults?"

"Oh, May," said Philip, "this is very unkind! I *can* bear it;—I can bear any thing from you, but your not loving me—

and here's something that prevents your loving me—and that makes you think we couldn't do together—and yet you won't tell me what it is."

"Well," said May, with apparent reluctance, "if I must tell you, I must. It is that——"

"Well," said Philip, eagerly.

"Well—it is that you're not like the London young men. You've no spirit—you're always afraid of doing this thing or that thing ; and if it's to cost a few shillings, you're just in a perfect fright. Now, I like a man that has some spirit and spunk in him, and not one of your milksops that's always tied to his mother's apron-string, and that durstn't say Bo! to a goose without her leave."

This was an accusation so much more severe and mortifying than Philip had anticipated, that he was quite taken aback; his face flushed, and he could not help feeling

very angry; not so much with his mistress, however, as with himself; for grievous as the impeachment was to a youth that could hardly yet be called a man, he did not venture to doubt its justice. "Doubtless, his education *had* been very narrow; he had been brought up with very low ideas, and had seen nothing of what was genteel and fashionable, till he became acquainted with May Elliott. What a difference she must see betwixt him and the London men! What a country booby he must appear in her eyes! those eyes in which alone he desired to shine!" It was a trying moment to poor Philip, and his countenance expressed all he felt.

"There now, I see you're angry; I told you you would be, you know; but you would force me to speak."

"I am very glad you have," said Philip, gravely; "and I don't wonder at all at your despising me. You have made me despise

myself. I see that it is impossible you should ever think of marrying such a mean-spirited, shabby fellow as I must appear to you, and that the sooner I take myself off and make room for that Mr. Ferdinand Pycroft, that took you to the Opera, the better. He's much more suited to you than I am."

"Very well," said May; "of course, if you choose to do so you must. It's not I that'll ask any man to stay that wants to go."

"But it's you that wants me to go, May."

"I'm sure I didn't say so!"

"But you must! How can any girl like a man that she thinks mean and stingy?"

"Certainly, one can't like him as much," said May. "That isn't in human nature, you know."

"Then you own that you don't like me so well as that d——d Mr. Ferdinand Pycroft," said Philip, giving vent to his jealousy in a mode of expression quite unusual to him.

"I didn't say so, Mr. Ryland. Perhaps

Mr. Ferdinand Pycroft don't like me!" But whilst May said this, there was a half smile at the corners of her mouth, intended to imply that she knew very well he did.

"Oh, I dare say!" said Philip; "you needn't suppose I'm as blind as that, Miss Elliott!" Now he had never seen this redoubtable Mr. Ferdinand in the company of his mistress but once in his life, and that was when he saw him hand her into the hackney-coach.

"As for his liking you, of course I can answer that myself," continued he; "but the question is, do you like him? Because, if you do, curse me if I don't blow his brains out, or my own!"

"I think he's a very nice young man," said May.

"You do?" said Philip, fiercely.

"Yes, I do; don't you?" answered May, with the most perfect sang froid.

In spite of his anger and his jealousy,

there was something in this question so irresistibly ludicrous to Philip, that he could not help laughing. "Oh, May, May!" he said, seizing her hand, "how can you torment me so? You know I adore you, and I can't bear to think of any body daring to love you but me; and if I but thought you loved that fellow!"—

"I didn't say I *loved* him," returned May. "I only say that he is a nice, spirited young man, and that he has ideas like a gentleman. He wouldn't let Mrs. Knox or me pay sixpence towards the coach that night; and the other day, when I was at Harvey and Graham's—he's in the feather and flower department there—he invited me to go with him in the evening to Farrance's, to eat ice, and—"

"And you went?" said Philip, growing fierce again.

"No, I did not," answered May; "I couldn't get away from work early enough;

and he said he hoped I would do him the favour to accept a ticket some evening for Astley's, and let him have the honour of escorting me. Now that's what *I* call behaving like a gentleman."

"If you wish to go and eat ice, or go to Astley's either," said Philip, "I should think I'd at least as good a right to escort you as Mr. Ferdinand Pycroft, and—"

"But you never asked me to do either," interrupted May.

"I know I haven't," answered Philip; "but I ask you now; and therefore, if, after this, you go with him, I shall know what to think, and shall act accordingly."

"Why, what shall you do?" asked May.

"Never mind what I shall do," replied Philip, in a tone that implied an inexorable determination to annihilate Mr. Ferdinand Pycroft, if he saw cause; "there's no need for you to know. All you have to do is to choose whether you like to go with him or



with me I've no right to force your inclination, of course."

"Well, then," said May, "I'll go with you."

"And you promise me not to go anywhere with him?"

"Oh, I don't know about positively promising that," answered May. "He's a very polite young man, and in a very good situation, and I shouldn't like to affront him."

"Very well," said Philip, biting his lips.

"Besides," continued May, "I cannot do without some amusement, I've always been used to it."

"But you shall have amusement, if you can be satisfied with my company. If not, say so, May Elliott! Say so at once—let me know the worst, and—" Here the pride and the vengeance yielded, and the poor lad burst into tears.

"How foolish!" said May, though in her heart delighted at this evidence of her power.

"I'm sure, Philip, I don't want to make you uncomfortable."

"Then why do you do it, May? You know, you know I can't bear it."

"Bear what?"

"That you should go anywhere with that fellow."

"Or with any other fellow, I suppose?"

"No, May, no; why should you go with any body but me?"

"Well, but then you must invite me to go, you know; or else I see no choice but to go with Mr. Ferdinand or somebody else."

"I will invite you, May; and I know I've been very wrong not to have done it before, and I don't wonder that you thought it very mean of me; but you shall never have reason to think so again, May."

"Well," said May, "I'm sure I don't wish to think ill of you, Philip. I'm sure I've given you reason to think I like you."

"*Like* me! Is that all, May?"

"Why, what would you have?" said May.

"I'd have you *love* me," said Philip.

"Will you, May, will you love me?"

"Lord! how unreasonable men are! Well, perhaps I'll try a little," said May, "a very little; that's if you behave well, though."

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## CHAPTER III.

LILLY'S FORTUNES ONCE MORE SHOW SYMPTOMS OF  
AMENDMENT.

WHILST May Elliott was playing this cruel game with poor Philip Ryland—and a cruel game it was, idly as the dialogue may read—a game in which both were sure to be ultimately losers, however well her cards looked in the hand, her former companion, Lilly Dawson was very differently engaged. If Fortune is blind and capricious, we, the subjects of her whims and blunders, are no clearer sighted. We cannot see an inch beyond our noses; and whilst we are for ever quarrelling with her best schemes, we are just as precipitate in applauding her worst.

Or, to take a more serious view of the case, is it not true, that through the gates of sorrow we enter into the palace of gladness; and that through the valley of tears we ascend to the hills of rejoicing? There seems to be one thing quite certain, namely, that there is no misfortune irremediable but vice and wickedness; and that, however darkly the clouds may have gathered above our heads, however ruggedly the path may seem to stretch interminably beneath our feet, if we can but keep fast hold of truth and integrity, we shall come to a gleam of light and a green sward somewhere—perhaps, in the most unexpected quarter. It was so with Lilly; when her fortunes were at the lowest ebb, and her little vessel of hope and peace seemed stranded, she had found a haven of shelter from the rude winds and the bitter waters, under the same roof with her old acquaintance, Winny Weston; and a more genial shelter, in her circumstances, she could not have found.

Charles Adams, the once gay young soldier, the now, though yet but in middle life, depressed and poverty-stricken invalid, was, at this period, almost wholly confined to the house. Though the climate of India had disagreed with him, and somewhat damaged his constitution, it was much less that, than the long dreary lawsuit, the pangs of poverty, and solicitude for his wife and son, that had ruined his health. Well born, accomplished, and amiable, the husband of a deserving wife, and the father of a noble and beautiful boy, he found himself, by the cruel facilities which the English Court of Chancery lends to malice, cast out of all the enjoyments of life, to which he and his family had been accustomed; deprived of the society to which every circumstance, but money, entitled him, and a prey to never-ceasing anxiety about the pettiest details of daily economy; with the superadded misery of not being able to give his son such an education as would best

fit him to provide for himself, if need there was to do so; or becomingly fill his place in the rank he would be called to, should the suit be eventually decided in their favour.

That his daughter had been drowned, Colonel Adams never for a moment doubted; nobody did; not even the General, nor Crop-ley, nor the Chancery lawyers, however they pretended to do so. It was held certain that of the crew or passengers of the *Hastings*, no one human being had ever come ashore to tell the tale; and it was so improbable that the only survivor should be a feeble little child, that, had the parents entertained such a hope, it would have been pronounced, to the last degree, romantic and absurd. But nothing is too romantic and absurd to form the foundation of a lawsuit.

Deeply had the parents lamented their child, and deeply did Charles Adams lament his wife, when sorrow brought her to her early grave; but he was not formed to live

alone, and he married again ; being then possessed of a small patrimony, which he inherited from his father, who, whilst in charge of Lilly, had perished by the hands of the assassins. But this, and his wife's little fortune, had been dissipated in the lawsuit, and now all was gone, but his half-pay ; his health and vigour were fast forsaking him ; and his eye-sight seemed going too. Poor Charles ! His sun seemed to be setting in darkness, literally and metaphorically.

Long accustomed to affluence and elegance, it was very difficult for Colonel and Mrs. Adams to subside into all the *mesquineries* of poverty : to be economical without being niggardly is a difficult art. The shifts of penury are unknown to the affluent ; they must needs be learnt ; and it is a learning that experience only can communicate. Inevitably, therefore, the colonel and his wife had got into difficulties, before they had reduced themselves to the low level of their



means; and the struggle to keep clear of the *muddle*, inherent in an establishment served by a maid of all work on low wages, was still maintained at more cost than they could afford. Peggy, the servant, whose sudden departure had made way for Lilly, was only a blowzy girl of fourteen; down to whom they had declined, through various gradations, from the neat respectable parlour-maid, with which they had set out, when they established themselves in a small house at Lambeth; and it was a matter of discussion betwixt Mrs. Adams and her husband, how far they were justified in engaging another in her place.

"Certainly, she was better than nothing," observed the lady, "though she was very inadequate to what we require."

"We must not look to have what we require," returned Colonel Adams; "that's out of the question; but really, Selina, I don't see how you can get on without a second

servant of some sort or other ; especially, now that I am confined so much to my room, and need such constant attendance—and I am afraid shall need more, ere long.”

“ It is difficult to get a girl of that description,” replied Mrs. Adams, “ I mean such an one as we could venture to take into the house. They are so ill brought up, and so ignorant and dirty; and frequently so immoral, about this neighbourhood, at least, that I am really afraid of them.”

“ I wish we could keep this girl, Winny’s friend,” said the colonel. “ She seems quick and obliging; and Fred. has taken a great fancy to her.”

“ That’s impossible, I fear,” replied Mrs. Adams. “ From her appearance, I suppose she would expect ten or twelve pounds a year. Mrs. Bates had a nice looking daughter that she offered to me before I took Peggy. I’ll inquire if she is still disengaged.”

The young damsel, however, had found

another service ; but Mrs. Bates mentioned a niece of hers that she thought would suit exactly, and who would be extremely glad of the situation ; “ She’s just out for a week, ma’am, with a family in the Kent Road, as has got a daughter going to be married ; but when she comes back, I’ll send her to you, and I’m sure she’s just the sort of girl you want, and I know she hasn’t no engagement elsewhere.”

As Mrs. Bates was a decent woman, the lady was content to wait for the niece, on her recommendation ; but the marriage being delayed by some accidental circumstance, the girl did not return at the time expected. Meanwhile, Lilly continued quietly working on, as if she were a fixture in the place, though she did not know the day she might have to turn out to make room for Susan Bates. But week after week passed, and Susan did not appear, and at length one day, Mrs. Bates called to say, that the family she

had been with liked her so well, that the bride had engaged her services for herself.

"So I don't know what we're to do, Winny," said Mrs. Adams, when she communicated this piece of intelligence, "for I don't remember any other girl fit for the place, do you?"

"No, ma'am, I don't," answered Winny. "You wouldn't like to keep Lilly Dawson, I suppose?"

"I should like it very much," returned Mrs. Adams; "but she would require more wages than I intend to give, I fear."

"I don't think she would," replied Winny; "if you please, ma'am, I'll ask her."

And Lilly, who was the least sordid of mortals, and would have been too happy to remain where she was even without any wages at all, immediately agreed to accept whatever terms Mrs. Adams chose to offer.

Nobody was better pleased with this arrangement than Freddy, who, as his fa-

ther said, had taken an extraordinary fancy to Lilly; originating, in the first instance, in the darned waistcoat, but since confirmed, not only by repeated services of the same kind, but by other qualities that pleased him. Lads at that age are by no means insensible to beauty; and he thought her very pretty, since she had recovered her complexion and natural expression; which had been entirely disturbed, and, indeed, almost obliterated, for days succeeding that dreadful night. Then Lilly had very beautiful light brown hair, which, by imitating May, she had learned to arrange with great taste and elegance; and although it was not usual to see servants without caps, Mrs. Adams was not disposed to interfere with her new maid in this particular; especially as the neatness rendered the peculiarity inoffensive. Added to these recommendations, although her wardrobe was very scanty, and consisted of the most ordinary materials, she had acquired,

whilst at Mrs. Knox's, the art of wearing her clothes to advantage; so that she was altogether a very nice, pretty-looking young woman. Then she was very quick and obliging; her natural humility, which was one of her most distinguishing characteristics, preventing her ever thinking any thing a trouble that she was asked to do; and finally she had taken as great a fancy to Freddy as he had to her.

Lilly was subject to *engouements*; a weakness—we suppose, we must admit it *is* a weakness—which is very often the companion of many good and agreeable qualities; and it must be remarked that this disposition to form strong and somewhat sudden attachments by no means necessarily implies inconstancy. On the contrary, we have generally known such attachments extremely enduring, except where repulsion or unworthiness, on the part of the object beloved has broken the bond or destroyed the illusion; and even

then a kindly feeling will long survive the warmer sentiment. Lilly's first passion had been Mrs. Ryland and Philip, her second Abel White, her third May Elliott, and her fourth was Fred. Adams; but no one of these had driven out the preceding ones; and above them all, during these successive dynasties, Philip Ryland reigned paramount. Next to him ranged Abel White; but they all lived in her heart together. Even May, ill as she had behaved to her, was not wholly banished; she could not bring herself to think as much evil of her as circumstances might have justified her in doing; and now that she was happier herself, she often felt more sorrow for the loss of her friend, than anger at her dereliction.

There is undoubtedly a great deal of pain incurred by this sympathetic adhesiveness. The cold-blooded members of society do not understand it; the hard ones despise it; the shallow and superficial livers, who do not

look into the heart of the world, nor feel its pulses, laugh at it; and, unfortunately, the objects of these *engouements*, the fascinators themselves, not unfrequently belong to one of these classes. For it must be confessed, that occasionally, especially with the very young, these treasures of affection are sometimes sadly misplaced, as in the instance of Lilly and May Elliott. But on the whole, if there is much sorrow there is also much joy, and much genial cultivation of the heart to be derived from these natural fountains, which springing suddenly forth, make an Eden of a desert; and certain it is, that, if a fault it be, to be susceptible of, and to yield to, these strong sympathies, it is a fault of the most generous and candid natures. The unmerciful rigour, or contemptuous ridicule with which people who have reached what they erroneously suppose to be years of discretion, endeavour to nip and frustrate the blossoms of these flowers of existence, is as cruel as it



is injudicious. They may give pain by compressing the lambent flame, but it only burns the more vigorously; they cannot extinguish it. What they *can* do, and *do*, is to alienate affection from themselves, weaken their own influence, and fill young hearts with gall. Certainly, where *real* danger is espied, it must be guarded against; the nature of the peril must be indicated, and distinct reasons given for any authority that is exercised. But even then, unless the consequences apprehended are of a serious nature, though warnings may be highly commendable, authority is seldom wisely exerted. Impulsive natures *must* be taught at their own cost; that of others is of little or no avail to them; for the history of every heart, though alike, is different. They cannot stop to decipher a page which speaks not to their sympathies; nor examine a portrait presented to them as their own, where they find no resemblance. Their own suffering must

be their teacher, the only and the best; and one lesson of experience is worth a thousand sermons.

The little sympathy of the old with the feelings of the young, is a great, though unavoidable evil; and by the old, we mean people of any age, whose hearts are old; people who never were young, as well as those who once were so, but have forgotten it. For it is the age of the heart that makes us old; and those in whom years have not paled the vividness of their feelings and affections, are the evergreens of the earth. But in order that these should retain their freshness in age, they must have been extremely vigorous in the outset; there must have been a great deal of fire, for the chill of the world not to have put it out; and we never see an enthusiastic, warm-hearted, impulsive young girl whom the prudent persons about her are accusing of "taking violent fancies to people," and other like misdemeanours, without think-

ing what a delightful old woman she will make; and congratulating her children yet unborn. But to return to our story.

Winny Weston, too, was extremely pleased with the new arrangement. In the first place, she had had an opportunity of rendering back to Lilly the service the latter had done her in her need ; and in the next, she had secured for herself a capital helpmate ; one who besides aiding her generally, could do all the needle-work, a department in which Winny did not by any means shine. Then, above all, she had got a companion to whom she could speak of her past life, her home, and her lost lover, the singular circumstances of whose disappearance had added a solemn, as well as a romantic interest to the memory of their attachment. She would talk to Lilly for hours and hours on the subject ; indeed, it usually came in with the tea and bread and butter, and not unfrequently lasted all the evening. And it so happened that

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this was a subject scarcely less interesting to the confidante than to the heroine of the tragedy herself; for whilst Winny eased her full heart by dilating on Shorty's love and virtues, and somewhat appeased the irritability of her protracted wonder and curiosity as to his fate, by suggestions and questions, whereby she hoped to extract some gleams of light or traces of evidence against the Littenhaus family, Lilly on her part listened with excited attention to all the details of an affair, which at the time it occurred, had made little impression upon her. But late events were beginning to cast a lurid light on earlier ones. Fearful suspicions were haunting Lilly's mind with respect to the doings at the "Huntsman," although precisely what manner of mischief was acted at that lonely inn she did not understand. But there was one circumstance, the memory of which pervaded her with a shuddering horror; and that was the scene that had been transacted when her uncle Jacob lay dead

in his coffin, of which she had been an unseen witness.

Engrossed at the moment by the apprehension of being discovered behind the curtain, and too unsuspicious, dull, and unobserving, to draw conclusions afterwards, she had never comprehended, or sought to comprehend, the mysterious proceedings of that night. Indeed her own illness first, and the many events that had subsequently occurred to her, had almost effaced the circumstance from her recollection. But what black deeds midnight may cover, she had lately learnt by frightful experience; and since she did not doubt that it was for her own throat the knife was intended, she could almost as little doubt that Luke was the murderer; since she could not think of any one else who would be likely to seek her life. Besides, that she had been actually delivered into the hands of her cousins, she was assured by the presence of Charlotte Littenhaus.

Then, in pursuing her review of what she

had witnessed that night in her uncle's chamber, she could scarcely help coming to the conclusion, that the body substituted in the coffin was that of Philip's father, the subject of so much grief and such anxious inquiry. Indeed, dull as she was, and attaching no particular significance to the transaction, the idea had occurred to her at the time she learnt from Winny the object of Shorty's nightly excursions; though the fear of Luke would have effectually prevented her giving utterance to the thought, even had she been certain of the fact. But if this were really Mr. Ryland's body, the question now naturally arose to her, how came her cousins in possession of it, and wherefore had they concealed it? Had they murdered him? The more she reflected on all the circumstances of the case, and the more distinctly she pictured to herself their strange mode of life, the stronger grounds she perceived for admitting this apprehension. Then, if they had taken

Mr. Ryland's life, the belief that they had dealt in the same manner with poor Shorty, almost inevitably followed. Besides the various indications of the fact which she recalled, he must have been unconsciously rendering himself extremely obnoxious to them. There was reason enough for their wishing him out of their way.

It was a frightful thing for a young girl to believe herself a member of a family stained with all this blood; and except when her business diverted her thoughts into other directions, her mind was ever running on these problems, and endeavouring to solve them; so that Winny's never exhausted theme was one she was always ready for. Then Winny was rich in shocking stories of murders, especially those perpetrated by innkeepers; till by dint of collecting them, she had brought herself to look upon a road-side inn as a sort of slaughter-house; and she often made poor Lilly's flesh creep with the

tale of Jonathan Bradford, and others equally fearful.

She now too communicated to Lilly, that which on account of her youth, she had formerly forborne to tell her; namely, that on the night of his murder, for murdered she was sure he had been, her lover had appeared to her mother and herself.

There are few people in the world, if they had but courage to own it, who have not some instinctive persuasion that such apparitions are within the range of possibility; a persuasion against which they battle with all the force of their fallacious reason, which they erroneously suppose to be the surest guide, in a case beyond its province. Reason can tell us nothing of the invisible world; invisible to us, because the gross organs of this fleshly tabernacle in which we dwell on earth, are only calculated and designed to take cognisance of material objects. The possibility of the reappearance of the



dead, that is of their rendering their presence sensible to us, who are yet in the flesh, is a question that can only be argued upon experience—all *à priori* reasoning on the subject, being perfectly worthless—and the experience of all ages and countries is in favour of the fact; that is, if we are to believe the testimony of many credible persons, whose words would be received as a sufficient guarantee on any ordinary occasion. Under what peculiar conditions these recognitions take place, whether depending on the state of the seer or the seen, or the mutual *rapport* of both, we do not yet, and possibly may never know; but that such occurrences are more frequent than is commonly imagined, we are perfectly satisfied; although human pride and scepticism, and a reaction from the superstitions of a preceding age, caused them to be concealed, or denied, or explained away; but we trust the time is approaching, when this and similar subjects,

the most deeply interesting that have ever yet been presented to the investigation of the human race, will receive the attention they merit, and be examined in that truly philosophical and liberal spirit, which can alone elicit truth.

But on this matter we shall say no more at present; as we propose very shortly to offer to the public our humble contributions to the as yet, in this country, scanty literature on the subject in question, in a separate volume, which we shall denominate "The Night-side of Nature."

Lilly's mind was deeply stirred by this glimpse of tidings from the other world. If she had hitherto ever thought of death at all, she had looked upon it simply as extinction; she had seen nothing beyond the death of the body; that it was a translation—the mere act of passing from one condition of existence to another—had never occurred to her. It is true that Abel

White had talked to her of a future state, and told her that the soul survived, and could not die ; but her ideas of the soul, and the mode of its surviving, were much too vague to inspire her with any interest ; or perhaps it would be speaking more correctly to say that she had no ideas on the subject at all ; and in spite of all the teachings of the ministry, we fear Lilly's case is by no means singular. The human mind requires something more precise and tangible ; that which it is unable to conceive of, produces little actual effect ; and the notions of a future state generally presented by instructors, clerical or otherwise, are on the one hand too shocking to be believed, and on the other too insipid, and too far removed from our conceptions of what happiness consists in, to be very ardently desired, except it be as an escape from the opposite alternative.

But this strong persuasion of Winny's, that

she had seen her lover out of the flesh, awakened strange new thoughts in Lilly's mind. Once before she had had a momentary *feeling* that there *was* something beyond this material world; it was when Abel White took her to hear the cathedral service at E——. The solemn temple, and the young voices hymning forth the psalms, and sounding to her like the songs of angels, had touched and aroused her emotional nature; and it was then she first *felt* that there was a God; but her late course of life and companionship, had not been calculated to nourish this feeble germ, which had thus been overgrown and forgotten; nor had her church goings with Mrs. Ryland, nor the old lady's occasional Sunday catechisings, been of any avail to revive it. Nay, even the long dogmatic sermons, and the chapters from the Bible, which were read of an evening, were neither showers nor sunshine to Lilly's arid faith. To say the truth, they were more like an

east wind, drying and contracting the genial nature that might of its own accord have expanded into spiritualism; for she did not understand them, and they neither reached her intellect nor touched her heart; so that although after she met with the Rylands, till very lately, she had regularly attended the afternoon service, and spent the Sunday evenings after the most orthodox fashion, Lilly was in fact living as much without God in the world, as if she had been born and bred in a country where His name was not known, nor His being acknowledged.

But now various doubts were started; and her mind went through the wholesome process of wondering at many things that had previously excited neither observation nor curiosity; and many an hour she and Winny, after their own simple fashion, discussed such deep questions of theology and psychology as have puzzled philosophers of all ages; and it is extremely probable that the opinions they

arrived at were of about as much value as most of those which have been so magisterially announced by their learned predecessors.

Howbeit, the exercise of thought and the excitement of wonder, were very wholesome processes to Lilly. People who do not live in a continual state of wonder in this world, are in a miserable condition; for where every object we behold, and every circumstance of our own being, and that of others, is properly speaking miraculous, those who can survey them with indifference, and feel no desire to penetrate into their mystery, must be either mournfully dull by nature, or grievously blunted by use.

So Lilly had lived; but so she lived no longer. She had arrived at that blessed knowledge, that there *were* "more things in Heaven and Earth than were dreamt of in her philosophy!"

## CHAPTER IV.

## THE PAINS AND PERILS OF A BOY'S LOVE.

THERE is nothing that confounds sense with insanity like jealousy; the mind of a person, under the influence of that passion, whilst it may be physically sane, is morally insane; and such had been the condition of Philip Ryland, when he undertook to supply May Elliott with those expensive galantries, which she gave him to understand she could have commanded through the means of Mr. Ferdinand Pycroft. Whilst the words that bound him to this service were on his lips, he knew perfectly well that he had not wherewith to fulfil the promise he was making; but the intolerable pain he

felt from the apprehension of losing his mistress, must be got rid of at any cost ; nothing seemed so difficult, so impossible, as enduring that anguish ; and, in the excitement of the moment, the most hopeless enterprise seemed easy, compared to the task of supporting life under its pressure.

But when he quitted her, the force with which the truth of his situation rushed back upon him, was dreadful. He knew very well that May would expect the fulfilment of his engagements, and that she was not a woman at whose feet he could throw himself, and confess the mortifying, degrading fact, that he had no money ; for we are never so entirely deceived in people as we try to be ; they deceive us less than we deceive ourselves. If we chose to open our eyes, we could generally see ; but we do not ; preferring to act on the maxim that " Where ignorance is bliss, 'tis folly to be wise." The disenchantment comes at last ; but, as re-



garded Philip, the period for that desirable consummation had not yet arrived ; and in the mean time, the faith he had sworn himself to was, that May Elliott was an angel ; and he did not choose to alter his persuasion.

But that terrible question, " Where is the money to come from ?" which sits, like the Old Man of the Sea, on so many people's shoulders, weighed heavily on his. For the part he took in the business, he had a small salary, together with board and lodging for himself and his mother ; and in process of time, if he chose to remain with his aunt and cousin, he was to be taken into partnership ; and it was at that period he looked forward to making May his wife ; for the original plan of returning to the mill, which had been his mother's darling project as well as his own, whilst Lilly was in the ascendant, had since been relinquished, by himself at least ; for he perfectly comprehended that the life of a miller's wife, on a bare common,

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six miles from any town, would never suit his intended bride. But the partnership was yet a far distant hope ; and one, indeed, that was never likely to be realised, if he did not give satisfaction during his years of probation ; and to do this was not so easy as it had been before he became acquainted with May. Lilly led him into no expenses or irregularities ; but now he thought it necessary to dress better than formerly ; besides which, he was frequently later at night than the customs of the family authorised ; and his Sundays were now invariably spent from home. His aunt and cousin, whose views of life were not so rigid as his mother's, scrutinised his conduct less narrowly ; but she was very uneasy and very suspicious, and could not help communicating her apprehensions to them ; so that it was to be feared Mrs. Dewar would not long continue indifferent to the alteration in his conduct. All this was upon his mind, and, together

with his jealousy, and his scanty purse, formed a burden of care that rendered his life miserable. Yet, he could not extricate himself from it ; nor would not, if some benevolent magician had offered him a Lethean cup, that should have replaced him where he was twelvemonths before, and made him forget that such a person as May Elliott had ever existed in the world.<sup>1</sup>

Most evils and sufferings people are glad to get rid of if they can ; but for those caused by an imprudent passion, they are always determined to accept no remedy, even if one could be found.

In the mean time, his pride, his love, and his jealousy, all combined in urging him to act up to the promises he had made May ; and there was but one way of doing this, and that was to help himself to some of the proceeds of the business, which passed through his hands. As nobody doubted his honesty, and as he kept the accounts, in a great degree, himself,

nothing could be practically more easy; but the struggle with his own principles was a very different matter. It is difficult to conceive the agony of a young soul virtuously born and nurtured in such a strife as this. On the one hand, the madness of passion; on the other, the horror of crime; Oh! the sleepless nights and the anxious days!—The parched lips and fevered throat; and the burning brow, that made the pillow on which it rested so hot, that he was fain to fling it from under him. And then the necessity of concealing all this anguish from May, instead of finding in the bosom of his love, a generous sympathy, ready to share and lighten his burden!

The first question a man ought to ask himself before he allows his heart to become the thrall of a woman should be, "Is she worthy to be my friend?"

Philip would perhaps never have been able to bring himself to commit the act, had

he not in some degree reconciled, or sought to reconcile, his conscience to it, by the sophistical argument, that he was only anticipating his salary; and that thereafter, when he was received into partnership, he would replace whatever he appropriated. We know how many first steps in crime are made under some such delusion; and we know, too, how that first step, as well as some others, vindicates the proverb "*ce n'est que le premier pas qui coûte.*" The pilfered money purchased the pleasure; the pleasure whilst it lasted, made him forget the pain; but when the pleasure was over, the pain returned with double intensity, and needed more pleasure to drive it away, and so he was hunted forwards by remorse and desire, till he had wandered so far from the straight path, that despair took up the chase, and urged him wildly on to desperate ruin. Then came his aunt's suspicions, and his mother's tears, and his young cousin's aliena-

tion; and, finally, detection; and then he forsook his mother and his home, and fled; intending not even to tell May whither he was going. With livid cheeks and haggard eyes, he one evening burst into her room, and said he was come to bid her farewell. At first she did not believe him; but when she became convinced he was serious, and that she was really about to lose him, her whole demeanour changed; she threw herself into his arms, and with passionate tears conjured him not to leave her; or if he would go, to take her with him. Here was a strange consolation in the hour of his deep woe! May, then, really loved him! All his jealousy, all his fears, had been groundless; her heart was his, and she was ready to share his desperate fortunes. How he had wronged her in concealing from her his poverty and his straits!—How he had wronged himself! And now adoring, and adored, he must leave her; for how could

he stay, or how could he drag her into the misery and destitution that probably awaited him?

All these feelings rent his heart ; but still in this delightful revelation of her love, there was such a balm that joy and sorrow contended in his breast for the mastery, and he felt almost inspired with a hope that all was not lost, and that he might save himself still. His prospects in the London business were blighted. Terrified at what had occurred, his mother would have been as averse as his aunt, to exposing him to further temptations ; neither, indeed, could he have dared to encounter them himself ; but his interest in the mill was not abrogated ; his own family would desire nothing better than his reformation, and therefore would not expose his errors, and the motives of his leaving London would probably never reach the country. Might he not therefore return there and resume his former position under

Luke, till the time arrived that would make him master of the mill, and then bring home his poor old mother, and marry May Elliott? For if she loved him enough to share his present wretchedness and disgrace, of course she would not hesitate to unite herself to him when his fortunes would be so much more prosperous. All this glanced through his mind, whilst she, in all the violence of surprise and disappointment, besought him with tears not to leave her.

“Oh, May!” he said, pressing her wildly to his heart, “why did you let me think you did not love me? Why did you make me jealous and mad?”

“I never thought you’d believe me,” sobbed May. “I never thought you supposed I cared for Mr. Ferdinand Pycroft or any of them. But it isn’t *that* you’re going away for, is it?” said she, looking up at him, and suddenly ceasing to weep.

“No; it’s because I’m in trouble, May,



that I'm going; but it would break my heart to think that after I am gone you encouraged that fellow."

"I don't want to encourage him," replied May; "but you shall not go unless you let me go with you. What trouble is it that's making you go, Philip?"

"It's one I can't tell you, May; but you will promise to keep your heart for me till I can come and fetch you? Will you swear to love nobody but me, May? Will you?"

"No," said May, "I won't promise unless you'll take me with you; but if you will, I'll promise any thing."

"I dare not," said Philip, whose resolution was fortified by this display of attachment on the part of his mistress, for it inspired him with hope for the future, and with a more earnest desire to repair his fortunes and his character, in order that he might, under different circumstances, complete his own happiness and reward her fidelity. "Not for worlds

would I drag my darling, beautiful May into the misery that probably awaits me for the next few years. Oh, May! if I were but a king that could lead you to a palace, and adorn you with jewels, and give you a hundred slaves to kneel at your feet and obey your looks!"

"But you haven't got a palace, nor slaves, nor jewels, either; but that's no reason why you should behave so ill to me! Why can't you stay in London? If you have quarrelled with your friends that needn't prevent your getting another situation. I can get you one. Besides, I'll speak to Mrs. Knox, and amongst the tradespeople she knows, I'm sure she could get you one. La, Philip! they'd be glad to have such a handsome young man as you are, at many shops; they always have handsome young men at Harvey's and Graham's. And then you must dress stylishly, like Mr. Ferdinand Pycroft, and you'll look a great deal better than he does,

for you're a much better figure, only that his clothes are better made than yours."

"It cannot be, May," answered Philip half flattered and half vexed, but still sufficiently in his senses to know, that after what had happened, he must not attempt to take another situation in London; "It cannot be, though it breaks my heart to do it, I must leave you, for the present. But if you will be faithful, May, if you will but love me, and wait for me, we may be happy yet. Will you promise me?"

"I don't know," answered May, pouting. "If you won't do what I ask you, I don't see why you should expect me to do what you ask."

"But I can't stay, May. God knows, I would if I could!"

"Oh," said May, "where there's a will there's a way."

"There's no way but what will be my ruin, May; you wouldn't wish that, would you?" said Philip.

"Oh, nonsense, ruin! What's to ruin you? People get into difficulties, and get out of them again, without being ruined. Lord bless me! it's just because you're not used to any thing, that you're in such a quandary. If you're afraid of your mother, never let out to her where you are; and I'll recommend you to Mrs. Knox, and say you're my brother, or my cousin, or something of that sort; and she'll recommend you to Dyde's and Scribe's, or Harvey's and Graham's—"

"I'd rather be shot than go to Harvey's and Graham's, to stand behind a counter with that fellow that I hate," said Philip.

"Well, it shan't be Harvey's and Graham's," said May. "There are plenty of shops that want handsome young men, besides theirs!"

But Philip understood his own situation too well to entertain the idea of remaining in London. Though guilty, he was not perverted; and no arguments of May's could

have brought him to think lightly of what he had done. She might even, by irritating his pride and his jealousy, have urged him to a repetition of his offence; but she could not so far beguile his judgment as to make him look upon an act of dishonesty as a thing indifferent. With respect to May's loose principles and want of respect for truth, his judgment was less free. "Love was the cause of her folly;" and since he was the object of the love, her sins, "though they were as scarlet," never appeared to him of a deeper hue than pale pink; little peccadilloes, to be overlooked in so pretty and fascinating a woman.

"Then you are determined to go?" said May, almost sulkily.

"I must," answered Philip. "Oh! May, would I leave you if I could help it? But from this moment till you see me again, every thought and every hour shall be spent in the endeavour to bring about our union. If I

can only once get a house over my head, that I can call my own, and be sure of the means of supporting you in comfort, I'll fly to London and carry you off, May, to my cottage, and there we'll live as happy as two birds in a cage."

We fear the simile was more appropriate than inviting.

"Oh, pooh!" said May; "when will that be? You may as well say, that when the sky falls you'll catch larks."

"Oh, May," said he, "don't discourage me! I need all the courage you can give me, to enable me to bear my own troubles, and this parting with you. You must strengthen me to meet all the miseries and the hardships I have before me, till I can conquer them, and call you my own; will you, May?"

"I don't know," said May, ungraciously.

"But, May, if you really love me, and if you did not love me, you surely wouldn't

be so anxious to keep me here—but if you do, you must wish that I should try to get into some way of business that may enable me to have a home for you. Now, I see but one way of doing this, at least I'm sure it's the shortest, and that is to go back to the mill; and——”

“To the mill! Is that where you're going?” said May, her cheeks turning crimson, and looking very much amazed.

“I did not mean to tell you,” replied Philip, “but perhaps it's only fair that I should; only you must keep it a secret; as for the present, I don't want my mother nor any body to know where I am.”

This was a piece of intelligence that quite confounded May, and baffled all her calculations. In order to remove Lilly, of whom she was quite as jealous as Philip was of the redoubted Mr. Ferdinand, out of her lover's way, she had, through the intervention of Giles Lintock, betrayed her into

the hands of her cousins, and she did not doubt that Lilly at that moment was at the "Huntsman," either with or without her own consent, free or a prisoner; and now Philip was going to the very spot where he would not only be exposed to the charms of this dreaded rival, but where he would moreover learn what a false friend and a viper his lovely, angelic May Elliott was.

What was to be done now? The only feasible expedient that presented itself to May, was to go into hysterics, and she put it in practice immediately; the hysterics on this occasion being, as is frequently the case, partly real and partly factitious. The passion and the tears were perfectly genuine, for she was very much in love with Philip, and she saw that this scheme of his would be the means of awakening him from his infatuation, and be the destruction of her influence for ever; but hoping to overcome him by the magnitude of her despair, she could not forbear heightening the tone of the pic-



ture by a few touches of frenzy. And deeply was poor Philip moved by her anguish; but he held firmly to his resolution still, and to her surprise and dismay, she found that this young man, whom she had hitherto played on as a pipe, had a will of his own as strong as hers, when the antagonism of his nature was sufficiently aroused to exert it; and in the present instance, the agonies of shame, the dread of exposure, and the desire to re-integrate his character, and recover his self-esteem, sufficed to furnish the requisite energy. The truth was, that though a boy in years and in experience, Philip had the makings of a man in him; and although he had been led into error under the influence of a dangerous woman and an intoxicating passion, he had an honest and an upright heart, a love of virtue, and a fund of good feeling, that must have rendered him inevitably miserable as long as he knew himself unworthy.

Some of the finest natures existing amongst

men, are those who, gentle and complying, almost to a fault, can yet show themselves possessed of an iron will, when an adequate occasion for firmness presents itself ; and if Philip had studied as artificially how to enflame her love and deepen her regret, as she had done to get the better of his judgment, and shake his determination, he could not have adopted a more efficient means ; for there is nothing more fascinating to women than such a display of character, where the circumstance justifies its exhibition. The more resolved Philip was to go, the more ardently she wished him to stay ; and the more she saw how capable he was of keeping a resolution he had formed, the more clearly she perceived that if he once saw her as she really was, with all her faults and imperfections on her head, which now her beauty and the glamour she had cast over him concealed, he would probably be as inexorable in his determination to fling

her off for ever, as he now was to separate from her for a time. Whilst Philip, on his part—such are the cross purposes of intersecting passions—whilst he felt deeply for her affliction, found himself sustained and fortified in the sacrifice he was making, by her frantic efforts to induce him to forego it.

And so they parted; he swearing eternal fidelity, and endeavouring to reconcile her to the present, by holding out vivid hopes for the future: she drowned in tears, yet angry and sulky, and mingling the most bitter reproaches with her entreaties and lamentations.

It was night when Philip found himself in the street after this interview, and with his heart somewhat lighter than it had been—for surely she would wait for him—she would be faithful—so much love could never die, he hastened to the office whence the coach started, and with his hat drawn

over his eyes, and his coat buttoned across his chin, he took his seat on the outside; and in an hour after he had parted with May, he was whirling along with the Enterprise to Hotham.

If he could, by any possibility, have taken a peep into the room where he left her, he would have been entirely confirmed in the above satisfactory persuasion. For the first two hours, she lay stretched on the sofa with her face buried in the cushions, in convulsions of grief and despair; and when the violence of these demonstrations somewhat subsided, it was not because she was in any degree reconciled to her loss, but because the desire of finding some means of averting the misfortune, obtained the ascendancy, in its turn: and under the influence of this new motive, she arose, dried her tears, and gathered her energies together, whilst with her lips firmly closed, and her arms crossed upon her breast, she paced the room from end to end, and set herself to think.

This was the first reality May had ever come in contact with. Life, to her, had hitherto been a masque, wherein she had played upon the feelings of others, her own unscathed; but the tables were turned now. She was wretched; and she bore her misery with all the impatience of an unsubdued temper, and an untrained mind: aggravated as it was, by the restless whisperings from within, reminding her, that her misfortune had its source entirely in her own unprincipled selfishness and folly.

## CHAPTER V.

## LILLY IN HER NEW HOME.

As Lilly was so handy with her needle, it was thought advisable to take this opportunity of refreshing and repairing the family wardrobe; and as Colonel Adams liked to have somebody always in his room, when his wife or son were not with him, Lilly sat there; he submitting to have his eyes darkened in order that sufficient light might be admitted for her to see her work. It was very natural that under these circumstances he should enter into conversation with her; and he began in the first instance, by interrogating her with respect to her own past life, where she came from, who she had lived

with, whether her parents were alive, and so forth. But on all these points he found Lilly singularly reserved; insomuch, that he left off with little more information than when he began. But as this was the first day she had sat in his room, he thought she might be restrained by shyness and timidity, and so the thing passed from his mind. On the following day he desired her to read the newspaper to him, and as she mispronounced many of the long words and proper names, he took the trouble of correcting her. He also explained to her what he perceived, from the tone of her voice, she did not understand; and Lilly becoming more at her ease, they got on better together; whilst as he reverted no more to the subject of the first day's conversation, their intercourse at each visit grew less constrained. Too poor to take a newspaper, or to purchase books, he had nevertheless plenty of both, various old

friends in different parts of the world sending him the former, and the latter being furnished by the clergyman of the parish, who had a very tolerable library. These in progress of time it became Lilly's almost daily business to read, as soon as it was found that she could do so sufficiently well to be understood ; for Frederick attended a day-school, and Mrs. Adams was delicate, and could not read aloud without fatigue. Previously to this, Lilly had never read any thing in her life, except the Bible, and at first she found it rather an irksome employment ; but now and then she would come to something that arrested her attention, or that would lead Colonel Adams to tell her a story, or give her some piece of curious information ; till at length, little by little, she began to take up the books with a different feeling ; her curiosity was awakened—she would venture to ask questions occasionally—which he always



encouraged her to do ; and, above all, she began to *think* of what she had read.

Humble, gentle, and obliging, with a sweetness of disposition that spoke in her tuneful voice, Lilly grew daily in the favour of her master. Besides, her name had a charm for him; it brought back tender memories, though they were sad ones ; whilst the frequent attendance and the readings, and the instruction he gave her, endeared her to him so much, that he would generally address her as "Lilly, my girl !" or "Lilly, my child !" treating her with a degree of kindness and familiarity quite unaccustomed in their relative positions.

With Lilly's natural adhesiveness, it may be supposed that this sort of intercourse could not continue long without producing a very sensible effect upon her. Colonel Adams became her Abel White, whilst Freddy was her May Elliott. Towards the one, she felt a mixture of tenderness, reve-

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rence, and affection; towards the other, an enthusiastic love and admiration. He was her darling, beautiful Freddy! and she waited upon him as if he had been the heir-apparent, and watched for his comings in and goings out, as if he had been her sweetheart. To make a waistcoat for him out of one of his father's old ones, or to hem his new pocket handkerchief, she would sacrifice her night's rest with delight; and when he got his heel bitten by the milkman's dog, whom he had accidentally offended by running his hoop against him, she insisted on sucking the wound lest the animal should be mad.

In return for all these services, besides being very fond of her, Freddy rendered her one very great one; he taught her to write, lending her his own copy-books, and giving her a lesson every evening. Her deficiency in this necessary accomplishment, was very early discovered, by her being required to make out the weekly washing bills; and

Freddy no sooner heard his mother lamenting her ignorance, than he joyfully undertook to become her instructor. A person at Lilly's age, who has tolerable intelligence and a desire to learn, may soon acquire the art of writing a legible hand, if not an elegant one; and as Lilly was very much ashamed of not being able to do what she found most other persons in her station could, she soon attained a reasonable degree of facility; and no sooner did she find herself able to write a letter, than she indited one to her old friend, Abel White, which she forwarded by the post; forgetting, however, to pay the postage in advance, so that poor Abel was nothing the better for it.

Lilly had thought herself very happy whilst tramping along the road with the old blind beggar; and still happier during her early days of housekeeping with May Elliott; but now she was happier than ever. It was a higher kind of happiness that she now en-

joyed, and she was better able to appreciate it, for her mind was daily opening and ripening under these genial influences and generous tuitions.

It was not that she had forgotten Philip; far from it; not a day of her life passed that she did not think of him; but it was with a tender and unresentful regret. She had been too sensible herself of May Elliott's fascinations, to be surprised at their effect upon him and had too humble an opinion of her own attractions, not to find excuses for him. She often wondered if they were yet married; and this train of thought generally terminated in an ardent wish, that she might never be called upon to undergo the painful trial of seeing them together.

The recollection, too, of the dreadful night passed in the lodging, and the frightful death of Charlotte Littenhaus, frequently came over her with a shudder of horror; and it had been long before she had recovered her na-

tural rest or the shock her nerves had received. The family had attributed her shaking hand, and pallid complexion, and uneasy, anxious look, to an ill-state of health; and as she gradually improved, they were naturally confirmed in this supposition. As for Winny, she ascribed the agitation and tremour in which she had first arrived, to her distress at quarrelling with May Elliott, and frequently she had proposed making an effort to bring about a reconciliation, which Lilly, however, always entreated her to forbear, assuring her she did not wish May to know where she was.

## CHAPTER VI.

## PHILIP PUTS IN PRACTICE HIS GOOD RESOLUTIONS.

PHILIP reached Hotham on the morning after he had started from London, and having taken some breakfast, he forthwith set out on foot for Combe Martin, or rather for Sir Lawrence Longford's; for to the baronet who had hitherto shown himself his fast friend, he intended first to present himself; but as he passed the "Red Lion," old Lacy, who was occupying his usual position at the door, hailed him with a "Hallo! young man! what tired of London, eh? Back to the old shop, I see."

"Yes," said Philip, "I *am* tired of Lon-

don, and I don't care if I never see it again. Is Sir Lawrence at the Hall, do you know?"

"Yes, he's there," answered Lacy; "I saw your old master, Luke Littenhaus, going up that way, just now, in conversation with Mr. Cobb. We heard you was settled in London, and that Luke was to be *properiotor* of the mill after all; and I rather think that's what they've got in hand now."

"I'd better look sharp, then," said Philip. "How is the mill doing? and the 'Huntsman?' Just in the old way, I suppose."

"Much of a muchness, I fancy," said Lacy. "I sends them up a customer now and then, but I can't say as'ever I got a 'thankye' for it. Miss Charlotte, she's married, you know, to a Mr. Locksley; and gone away from here—but perhaps that was before you left."

"No," replied Philip, "it must have been afterwards. I think I remember once seeing a man of that name at the house—a sea-faring man he was, I think."

"I don't know nothing on him," answered Lacy. "They wasn't married here; they went over to Hotham to get spliced; but I s'pose he was a man of fortin, at least; for Miss Grosset says, I'm told, that she had as fine silks and satins as Miss Longford herself. But they do dress surprising, to be sure! I often wonder where the money comes from."

"Well, I must be going," said Philip, who took no interest in the toilet of the Littenhaus ladies, "for I want to catch Sir Lawrence before he goes out."

As the servants all knew him, he had no difficulty in obtaining admittance to the baronet's study, where he found Mr. Cobb.

"Humph! That's odd enough!" said Sir Lawrence to the agent, as Philip was announced. "It seems to realise the old proverb! Why, Philip, what has brought you back so suddenly?"

"I don't think London will answer for



me, sir," replied he, "and I wish, if you please, to settle at the mill again."

"You shall do that if you wish it, certainly," returned Sir Lawrence; "the promise I made you, I'll keep—I was just telling Luke Littenhaus so."

"Does he want the mill, sir?"

"Yes, he does; he always did, you know. But I told him that my engagement to you was still binding; and that if you came back to claim my promise, I must keep it. But what has brought you back?"

Philip blushed, and with some confusion, answered, "I don't think, sir, I'm altogether fit to live in London."

"Well, you must be the best judge of that," said Sir Lawrence; "and you are very right to leave it, if you think so. You will then stay the appointed time with Mr. Littenhaus, and at the expiration of it, he will resign the mill to you, if you think yourself able to manage it."

“I’ll try to make up for lost time, sir,” said Philip; and after some inquiries about his mother, Sir Lawrence bidding him good morning, he took his leave, and proceeded to the mill, in order to present himself to his old master. It is needless to say that he met no welcome—he did not expect one; but he had thoroughly made up his mind to have no quarrel with Luke; but as an expiation of his past offences, to bear patiently with his temper and his tyranny, till time should set him free of both. He now also wrote to his mother, avowing where he was. Ever since his interview with May, which had served as a safety-valve to his over-excited feelings, he had been calmer and more capable of reflection; and had consequently felt considerable remorse for the anguish he was sure his mother must be suffering on his account. He now thought he saw his way more clearly before him; he was able to look at the future; and he hoped, with the aid of

May, and his own perseverance and stern resolution, to recover his self-esteem and the esteem of his friends, and to be able yet to work out his destiny with honour to himself and credit to them: and so he told his mother; adding, that whatever annoyances he might have to encounter on the part of Luke Littenhaus, he should look upon as no more than a just punishment for his errors.

At the "Huntsman," he found things much as formerly, except as regarded the absence of Charlotte, and the addition to the family of a young girl in Lilly's place. The sight of her rather affected Philip; for his own misfortunes had softened his heart, and he recalled poor Lilly's former kindnesses in his boyish, hungry days; her innocent joy when she met him and his mother in London; her gratitude and affection towards them; and finally, the neglect with which he had lately requited her services and attachment. Not that he knew exactly the extent of

the latter, for no declaration had ever been made on either side; and therefore when his own affections veered into another quarter, he had no great difficulty in persuading himself that Lilly's sentiments had never exceeded the bounds of a sisterly regard. But even so, he felt conscious that he had not behaved well to her; and he resolved, when he wrote to May, to send her a kindly message and ascertain her present address.

On the whole, he now found his situation less unpleasant than it had been formerly; for though Luke was as disagreeable as ever, Philip was more of a man now, and was better able to cope with him. As for Ambrose, he had never shown any disposition to annoy him; besides, he had little to do with him; whilst Anna now evinced an incipient disposition to be his friend. The two years Philip had passed in London had produced a very considerable alteration in his personal appearance, and his love for

May, and her elegancies, had softened and somewhat refined his manners. He was not a mere rustic Adonis now, but might very well, had he been ambitious, have aspired to be the Corypheus of fashion in Combe Martin and the vicinage; with his handsome face, well-made person, and London cut habiliments. His very sufferings, too, had improved his appearance, by giving an expression to his countenance which it before wanted; so that, altogether, Anna Littenhaus was privately of opinion that he was "a very nice young man," and as she saw no reason for concealing her sentiments from the object of them, she began to testify her regard exactly in the same way that poor Lilly had formerly done—namely, by giving him large lumps of pudding and other edibles, by no means unwelcome to a youth who lived on a breezy common, close to the sea-shore. It is true, that for the first few days, his appetite was rather sickly; but hope and occu-

pation, and the elasticity of youth, together with the satisfaction resulting from the consciousness of trying to do right, soon restored it, and rendered these solid gallantries of the lady very acceptable. When Luke was out of the way, she ventured on still further civilities, and not unfrequently favoured him with her conversation. On these occasions she would sometimes make references to Lilly and her mysterious disappearance, and being altogether unconscious that Philip had any interest in her, she was extremely frank in her communications on this subject.

"Lilly," she said, "had escaped in the most artful way in the world; satisfactorily proving that she had been acting a part, and was by no means so stupid as they had imagined. She never showed the least dislike to marrying Luke," said she; "indeed, we supposed she would have thought it a great rise for her, shouldn't you?"

"Perhaps she didn't like him," said Philip.

"Oh, she knew nothing about liking or disliking," said Anna; "at least, we thought so. Didn't you think her very stupid?"

"She wasn't very bright *then*," said Philip, suddenly stopping short with the recollection that he must not betray Lilly's whereabouts by communicating the change that had taken place in her.

"No," answered Anna; "but she must have been deeper than she seemed, though. Think how cleverly she must have managed it, to get out of Hotham and leave no trace behind her."

"And did you never hear any thing of her afterwards?" inquired Philip.

"Yes, we have; Luke has been up after her twice; once to the west of England. He put an advertisement in the paper, and offered a reward—I'm sure I don't see why he should want to get her back, for my part; since she *is* gone, I'd let her go, if I were him. However, a man answered it, and Luke went to the place where he said she

was, but she was off, nobody knew where, and they did say that she had committed a robbery, and then set fire to the house to conceal it."

"What a lie!" exclaimed Philip, involuntarily.

"Ah! you think she's not sharp enough," said Anna, "but she's sharper than you think; for since that, he heard of her again and she slipped through his fingers just as cunningly."

"Indeed!" said Philip, curious to know to what she now alluded; for as regarded her two first escapes, he had learnt all the particulars from Lilly herself.

"I don't know any more, for Luke, you know, is as close as wax," she replied, "only that he got a letter—I believe it was from the same man, saying she was somewhere in London, and telling Luke that if he would go up, he would put her in his hands, and Luke went, but he came back without her, though."



"How was that?" asked Philip, whose curiosity was considerably excited.

"I don't know exactly," replied Anna. "Luke was very sulky when he returned, and never said a word to me on the subject; but Ambrose told me, whilst he was gone, that Lilly was to be taken to where Charlotte lodged. Charlotte married Locksley, you know—you remember Locksley?"

"I believe I've seen him," answered Philip, "a seafaring man?"

"Well," said Anna, not entering into further particulars about Locksley, "Charlotte and he were in London, living somewhere near Smithfield, and there Lilly was to be taken; but how Luke missed her I don't know, only she never came here."

"This must have been a great disappointment to your brother," observed Philip, wishing to discover the motive of Luke's perseverance in this pursuit of a person he had always seemed to despise; "he must, no

doubt, be very much attached to her, to take such trouble about the business?"

"Attached!" answered Anna, laughing; "Luke attached to Lilly! Lord help you! he's no more attached to her than you are."

"What does he want to marry her for, then?" inquired Philip.

"Oh! he has his reasons, I suppose," said Anna; "but if he'd take my advice and Ambrose's too, he'd let her alone. Good riddance of bad rubbish, I say. But wilful men will have their way; so he must do as he pleases."

This information of Anna's with regard to Luke's unremitting pursuit of Lilly, and the circumstance of his having received some intelligence respecting her since her flight from Mrs. Ross's, surprised Philip a good deal, and inspired him with considerable alarm for the poor girl's safety. Lilly herself had told him every particular of her history, from the moment she quitted Ho-

tham ; so that he had no difficulty in fixing on Giles Lintock as the person who had hunted her up. Moreover, by further interrogating Anna, when she was in a communicative humour, he ascertained that this last visit of Luke's to London must have been contemporary with the separation of Lilly and May, since which he had never heard any thing of his old friend. It was very consoling, certainly, to learn that she had again eluded her pursuers ; but the terror and anxiety she must have undergone, and the difficulties she might have been plunged into in consequence of this persecution, caused him serious uneasiness. He knew, too well, that she had no friend now to protect her. He ought to have done it, and might, if he had retained his own station and respectability ; but he could do nothing now but warn and advise her ; and in order that he might do this, he resolved immediately to write to May, and inquire her address.

With respect to May herself, he was at this time not a little anxious ; as she had never answered the letter he sent her shortly after his arrival. His apprehensions pictured her to his imagination ill and broken-hearted ; the victim of love and disappointment ; probably, confined to her bed, and unable to write, from the effects of grief ; with nobody to tend and watch over her. This suspense was a great trial to poor Philip ; and it required all the energy of his good resolutions, and the moral purpose that possessed him, to inspire him with courage to attend to the dull business of the mill ; whilst his thoughts were for ever hovering around that visionary sick bed in Blenheim Street. He would have given the world to go to her ; but he held firmly by his resolves ; and only wrote and waited.

In the meantime, no particular incident occurred at the "Huntsman," except, one night, the arrival of a thin, sickly-looking man, dressed in a shabby black coat, whom he

understood to be Locksley, the husband of Charlotte. For his own part, except from Anna's information, he never would have recognised him, so much had his appearance altered since he last saw him. He had formerly exhibited a healthy complexion, and had worn the garb of a sailor, and Philip could not forbear inquiring of Anna the cause of the change. Much, however, as she seemed disposed to favour him, it was not every question he asked that she thought proper to answer. On the present occasion she was somewhat reserved.

"After he married Charlotte," she said, "he went into another line of business, and she supposed the change had not agreed with him. In my opinion," she added, "my sister had better have stayed as she was, for they live together like cat and dog. Charlotte wanted to come back here with Luke, that time he went up to fetch Lilly; but he wouldn't agree to it."

“ Who wouldn’t ? ” inquired Philip ;  
“ Locksley ? ”

“ No, Luke. He and Charlotte had had a good deal of quarrelling about the match, from the first ; but now he said, that as she had been determined to have him she must keep him.”

“ And where is she now ? ” inquired Philip.

“ In London, Locksley says ; but I don’t think they see a great deal of each other.”

## CHAPTER VII.

## PAST EVENTS.

RALPH LOCKSLEY was the son of a London tradesman, and was brought up to his father's business, which in due time, at the death of the old man, he had succeeded to. It was a prosperous concern, and he might have done very well in it, as his parents had done before him ; but Ralph was more fond of company than minding his shop ; and moreover, in his mode of conducting the concern, was apt to wander from the straight way into tortuous bypaths, whose pleasant meanders too frequently conduct people to very *un*-pleasant catastrophes. Ralph began with cheating the customs, in concert with some

of the officials of that somewhat corrupt department of the public service ; and he ended with cheating his customers, who did not like that proceeding so well as the first ; but it was the former delinquency which led to the latter. Some large seizures embarrassed his circumstances ; and he had recourse to dishonesty to repair them. This was discovered, too, and his credit being lost, and his business broken up, he not unnaturally had recourse to the line of life, at that period of our national history, so seducing and so profitable. He became a smuggler ; a pursuit in which his acquaintance with the value of certain sorts of merchandise, was extremely available to his coadjutors, who, for lack of this knowledge, were not unfrequently cozened by their allies on the other side of the Channel. It was in the prosecution of these enterprizes that he became acquainted with the Littenhaus family, who had long been engaged in the same traffic—



a traffic infinitely more pernicious from its perverting influences than from its direct effects ; the loss to the revenue being of slight importance, as compared to the injury done to the morals of the people.

Why he and Charlotte Littenhaus, after an acquaintance of some years, should have thought proper to unite their fates, it would seem somewhat difficult to decide. Perhaps, as far as regarded the lady, her inducements might be resolved into one ; namely, the extreme *ennui* that pervaded life at the "Black Huntsman." That is, female life ; for the male part of the family made themselves enough to do. When they lived at the extreme west, as they now lived at the extreme east of the island, their situation had been different. Smuggling was there too common, and too many people took advantage of it to be regarded as a very heinous offence ; and it was not till shortly before their removal, that they had been

looked on coldly, and made to feel themselves outcasts, and of this misfortune Luke's savage disposition was the cause ; he, who though the youngest of the family, from his strong will, governed them all. Smuggling was one thing—a little peccadillo, which as we have remarked, was looked upon with indulgence ; but direct robbery and murder were beyond the rubric ; and some awkward circumstances had brought Luke under suspicion. Amongst these was the affair of the *Hastings*. It is true, that the circumstances of her loss and the fate of her passengers were never distinctly known, for none survived to tell them, but one, and her hisping tongue could not relate what the young eyes had doubtless observed ; and ere she was old enough to translate her thoughts into intelligible words, the whole scene she had witnessed had become no more than a confused dream. But still there were indications that “ a deed had been done.” In

the morning, early, some fishermen had visited the wreck, then fast going to pieces. The body of the murdered man had been flung into the sea, but his blood yet stained the planks where the waves had not reached them, whilst in the distance, the white sail of the smuggler's cutter had been seen steering away from the ill-fated ship. But the fishermen had no desire to quarrel with the smugglers ; they did a little in that way of business themselves, sometimes, and they therefore brought no accusation against them. But still the thought circulated, and the word was given from one to another ; and the Littenhaus family found it desirable to change their quarters. But this change was a melancholy one for the young women, whose handsome persons and fine clothes were entirely thrown away at the "Huntsman." They continued to enrich their wardrobe with varieties of "brave attire," because from indulgence, what was originally

a propensity had grown into a passion, and like the miser and his gold, they had transferred their love from the use of the thing to the thing itself. They could not wear their fine clothes, but they could lay them in their drawers and look at them. Still, it was but a *triste plaisir*, one apt "to pall upon the sense;" so that it was not surprising some variety should be desired; and it was this weariness for change that had brought about the inauspicious union of Charlotte and Locksley. The scheme had been hers, and he consented to it induced by the prospects she held out to him, of what her brothers would do for her now, and in time to come. Amongst the rest, she and her husband were to set up a shop in London, which was to be furnished with such articles as the smugglers traded in, and betwixt the low prices at which they would thus be supplied with their goods, and the high ones at which they would sell

them, she looked to make a considerable profit. Locksley himself was aware of the fallacy of many of her anticipations; but as it was likely he might make something by the arrangement, he acceded to it. They went to London, but the shop was never opened. The goods were disposed of for present necessities, and when they were gone her fine wardrobe went after them, till at length the newly-married pair were reduced to utter destitution. Under these circumstances, it may be imagined that their *ménage* was not the most harmonious in the world. They quarrelled, and occasionally fought, and Charlotte would have gladly taken refuge at her former home, if they would have received her; but Luke forbade it. She was consequently extremely miserable, and was fast falling into the habit of drowning her cares in Lethean draughts when her sorrows and her vices found their earthly termination in a violent death; and this

little sketch having brought us up to the date of Lilly's fearful adventure, we will take the opportunity of narrating out of what circumstances it arose.

When Lilly confided to May, that Giles Lintock was no stranger to her, and that she had a deep interest in keeping her abode secret from him, May had not the most distant idea of betraying her. Indeed, had the idea of such a cruel act of treachery been presented to her mind as possible, she would have disowned it with indignation. As little would she have credited, that Lilly could ever have become an object of jealousy to herself; yet both these unforeseen events had taken place; and we must do her the justice to say, that no weaker incentive than jealousy would have induced her to commit so barbarous a breach of faith. Moreover, we must premise, that the notion that Lilly stood in any danger of her life from her cousins, had never occurred to her; that she would

be taken back into the country, and married to Luke, was the whole amount of evil she had anticipated. Thus, when she believed it indispensable to her own happiness to get her out of the way, she took the only decisive means she could think of; she betrayed her to Giles Lintock, who immediately transferred the information to Luke—not, of course, saying where she was to be found, but offering to put her into his hands on payment of the promised reward. Luke immediately came to London; but for some time they could not agree about the pecuniary arrangements. This matter settled, a scheme for delivering her up was devised betwixt the latter and May; but as Luke was anxious not to appear in the business till the last moment, lest she should see him, and, taking fright, escape again, the plan was formed which we have seen executed. The night for the enterprize being appointed, Giles was to be stationed in a certain spot,

with a hackney-coach, so that there might be no necessity for any orders being given in Lilly's hearing, she thus remaining ignorant of the name of the street she was conveyed to. They then drove her, according to directions previously given by Luke, to the house where the Locksleys were lodging; and Giles receiving her at the door, conducted her up stairs to a room hired for the purpose, and locked her in, without saying a syllable that could enlighten her with respect to so strange a reception.

"Well," said Giles to Luke, who was waiting the issue of the adventure in a neighbouring eating-house, "the bird's caught and caged."

"And the door locked?" said Luke.

"Fast; and here's the key," replied Giles; "so if you let her slip this time, it's your own fault, and not mine."

"She shan't do that," answered Luke, quietly.



"There now, I should be glad if you'd come down with the shiners," said Giles, "for I want to be off into the country with the daylight; but perhaps you'd first like to see that she's safe there?"

"No," answered Luke, who, under the cover of the darkness, had watched the arrival of the coach, and seen Lilly conducted into the house; "I don't want her to see me till it's absolutely necessary. She may take fright, and scream, and raise the neighbourhood."

"That's not very unlikely," returned Giles, significantly, "for she seems to have but an indifferent opinion of you."

"How? What do you mean?" inquired Luke.

"I mean what I say," replied Giles, not sure how far it might be safe to go; for like every one else who came into contact, or collision, with Luke, he was afraid of him. "She don't like you."

"I know that," returned Luke; and he might have added, "nobody ever did. But what does she say?" he rejoined, firmly; "I'll thank you to tell me."

"Nothing to me," answered Giles, "but she's given some awkward hints to the people she's been living with, about your doings down in the country, there."

Luke made no response to this unpleasant piece of information, for he was a man of very few words. He inquired who those people were; but Giles had his own reasons for not telling him that; so the conversation terminated, and the debt being discharged, they parted.

But the impression this hint made upon Luke was much deeper than he chose to display. He had long apprehended that Lilly knew more than she should do, and this intelligence seemed to confirm it. In this conjuncture, what line of conduct might it be advisable to pursue? For about two hours,

alternately biting his fore-finger, or twirling the key slowly with his right hand round the thumb of his left, or rubbing his chin with the palm of his hand, he sat debating this question. It was certainly a very important one. At length, having apparently duly weighed it, he arose from his seat, and taking the key in his hand, he went to the house, the door of which stood open for the accommodation of its several inmates, and by the light of a small lantern which he carried, he ascended to the room in which Lilly was a prisoner and gently turned the key; but whilst his hand was upon the lock some sudden thought made him hesitate, and he paused, and finally, after locking the door, without drawing out the key, he descended the stairs again as quietly as he had ascended them; and entered an apartment on the first floor which appertained to the Locksleys, where he passed another hour, in walking up and down the room, with his hands behind him, listening and thinking.

In the meantime, the Locksleys, who had been out together, arrived at home in the very climax of a quarrel. They had both drank more than they should; and hard words and bitter reproaches, flew from one to the other as they came up the street. When they reached the door he savagely bade her enter, which it had been her intention to do; but, because he told her to do it, she refused, and turned up the street again, whilst he went up stairs to the room where he found Luke.

Amongst Luke's vices, intemperance did not reckon; on the contrary, he had an entire contempt for those who "put an enemy into their mouths to steal away their brains;" he found too much use for *his* brains, such as they were, to be so prodigal of them. In consequence, therefore, of his habits of intoxication, rendering him an unsafe depository, he had ceased letting Locksley further into his confidence than was absolutely necessary; and, accordingly, he did not think it ad-

visible to say any thing to him with respect to his intentions regarding Lilly. For some-time, Locksley entertained him with complaints of his wife, who he said he had no doubt would not be home all night; and, when weary of this subject, he stretched himself on the bed and went to sleep.

It was during this interval, that Charlotte, who had only pretended to turn up the street, from a spirit of opposition to her husband, had ascended to the room where Lilly was sleeping, and given vent to her misery and her passion in tears. The apartment had been engaged some days before for the reception of the expected prisoner; and, supposing it still empty, she preferred sleeping there, as she had done on the previous night, to sharing her husband's chamber. But "sorrow's dry," and after a hearty convulsive fit of weeping, she felt the necessity of some drops of consolation; and it was to obtain this solace that she quitted the room.

In the meantime, Luke, leaving Locksley snoring on the mattress, once more ascended to Lilly's room. When he reached the door, he set down his lantern, and taking a large clasp knife from his pocket, he entered the chamber. It was now the middle of the night and all was quiet; and Lilly, who was listening to his every movement, breathed so gently, that he almost thought Giles had deceived him, and she was not there. But he advanced to the bed, and felt that she was; nor did he doubt, so motionless she lay, that she slept. It was at the very moment that he was about to use his knife, that he dropped it. To grope about the coverlet for it might have been vain and dangerous; the sleeper might have awakened. Neither did he wish to introduce the lantern. That, too, might have disturbed her sleep; besides, he consulted his own security in preferring the faint light from the window which sufficed to conduct him to the bed. He could ac-

comply with his object quite as well; and, if she did wake before he had attained it, she would not be able to recognise her assassin.

It now became necessary, however, to provide another weapon; and with this view he quitted the room, and descended again to that of Locksley, where he hoped to find a razor, and where he ultimately did find one, but not immediately; since the dull light furnished by his lantern, and the disorder of the chamber, rendered it not very easy to find any thing. He finally, however, discovered the article he wanted, in a bundle containing some articles of dress belonging to Locksley, which was thrust under an old settee. Being now provided with what he needed, he ascended the stairs once more, and softly entered Lilly's chamber. But in this interval the tenant of the bed was changed—Lilly, his intended victim, lay trembling beneath it—upon it, in the

heavy sleep of intoxication, was stretched his sister.

With one sudden and resolute grasp, he stopped her mouth with his left hand, whilst he drew the razor across her throat with the other. He then paused a minute, and stooped over the bed, to listen if she breathed; but he heard only the trickling of her life's blood; so he quitted the chamber and the house, well satisfied with his work; and immediately started on his way back to the country.



## CHAPTER VIII

## AN UNEXPECTED VISITOR AT COMBE MARTIN.

PHILIP did not very often go to the village, except on Sundays, when he went there to church. It was on one of these occasions, that chancing to cast his eyes up to the gallery whilst the organist was playing the voluntary, he almost lost his breath with amazement, at seeing a head that he thought certainly belonged to May Elliott. The head happened to be turned in another direction at the moment; but for all that, the resemblance was so striking, and the bonnet and shawl so similar to the last new ones he had seen her wearing in London, that his heart beat high, till he reflected on the

improbability of her making her appearance there. Added to which, the lady that had attracted his attention was sitting in a pew belonging to Sir Lawrence Longford, into which strangers of condition were usually shown; so it could not be May; it was only an accidental resemblance in dress and *tournure*. But still, although he rapidly arrived at this conclusion, he could not help watching for the turning of the head towards him—he longed to see the face that might resemble hers, too—and presently the head did turn, and the eyes were directed instantly to the corner where Philip sat, from which, indeed, they had only been temporarily diverted—and the face was the face of May Elliott!

Poor Philip! we need not say how his heart felt as if it were in his throat, and how the blood rushed to his cheeks, nor on what deaf ears, as far as he was concerned, the remainder of the service fell.

As for May, she stooped forwards, holding her pocket-handkerchief before her face, and he saw that she was laughing at the amazement his countenance expressed. She presently, however, collected herself into an air of mock gravity and composure, whilst he awaited the end of the service with restless anxiety. At length it terminated, and the rude voices of the village choir swelled on the ear, whilst the congregation slowly emerged into the open air, and then Philip went round to the door out of which May would necessarily pass, and awaited her at the foot of the stairs; and by and by, down she came, amongst the aristocracy of the neighbourhood, holding her head very high, and looking very demure. He allowed the great people to pass, and then he made an effort to join her, but she walked on with her head up in the air, affecting not to see him.

"It is her modesty," thought Philip. No, it was her pride. The inexperienced pew-

woman, judging her by her silk bonnet and lace veil, and the rest of her fashionable attire, had called her *my lady*, and put her into the pew "with the gentlefolks," and she could not bear to undeceive the woman by joining Philip; and, indeed, could scarcely bear to be undeceived herself. So she walked on, he following her, till they found themselves alone.

"May!" he said, at length, when he was permitted to address her; "why, May! how can I believe my eyes?"

"Well, what is there so surprising?" she asked, dryly.

"Surprising! Can you wonder I'm surprised?" said he; "I am perfectly astonished! When did you come?"

"Last Wednesday," she replied.

"What! you have been here ever since Wednesday!" he exclaimed, "and never let me know!"

"Well, it's time enough isn't it?" answered May, pertly.

• “And where are you living?” asked Philip, quite bewildered.

“I’ve got a house in the village,” answered May; “but it’s a poor, shabby place; and I shall look for a better.”

There was something about the tone of this conversation that was perfectly astounding to Philip. May was so cold, her answers were so short and dry, just in so many words telling him what he asked, and no more; whilst she walked along, scarcely looking at him, that he could not conceive what it all meant; for if it were not for his sake she had come to Combe, what in the world could have brought her there at all. But the cause of her strange demeanour was one that poor Philip’s mind, for an honest mind it was, in spite of his past errors, would never have guessed without assistance—the pew-woman had done it all. The “gentlefolks” and the “my lady,” and the contrast betwixt a very elegant young man, a visitor at the Hall, who in the most graceful manner and with the

whitest of hands, had opened the pew-door for her and picked up her pocket-handkerchief, and poor Philip, as he stood at the bottom of the stairs, waiting for her, was too much for her nerves. She was quite terrified lest he should betray her by addressing her familiarly in the presence of this exquisite person; and she had not yet forgiven him the fright. In short, although it was for Philip's sake she had resigned an excellent situation, and abandoned London, it most perversely happened, that at this precise moment she did not love him at all.

As Philip did not know what to say next, and as May did not seem inclined to say any thing, they walked on side by side, like two people that had quarrelled; he with his eyes on the ground, half affronted, and pondering what it could all mean; she looking straight before her, with a certain expression of injury and defiance on her countenance; which was produced by her consciousness that she

was behaving extremely ill, and her determination, for the present, not to behave any better.

For the purpose of avoiding the eyes of the curious, she had led the way from the village instead of towards it, and as they had now walked some distance and nothing very agreeable seemed likely to result from this sort of conversation, she proposed turning back, and Philip acceding, they retraced their steps; he, now thoroughly offended, as well as considerably perplexed. So, as he was too angry to speak, and she was too proud, they walked back in silence for some distance, till they drew near the village, and then May suddenly burst out laughing.

"What a fool you are, Philip!" she said. "You take every thing so seriously! You're offended now, I really believe."

"I think I've no great reason to be pleased," replied Philip; speaking as dryly as she had done.

"Pooh!" said she, "you never *can* take a joke. I was only doing it to try you. Come, be a good boy, and tell me if it was not very good of me to come all the way to Combe to see you?"

But it was not immediately that she could restore her lover's temper and self-complacence, which she had very much ruffled and disturbed. To come into the country at all, was a very imprudent step; but to come there to quarrel with him and make him uncomfortable, was cruel and inexcusable. May, however, was now bent on appeasing him. It was a distressing fact, that she did not, just then, love him half so much as she had done when she left London, or, indeed, as she had done three hours and a half previously, but still she could not afford to lose him whom she had come so far to seek; and she was painfully aware, that probably, by the following Sunday, the pew-woman would not call her *my lady*, nor mistake her for a



person of quality. So she tried to smooth poor Philip's ruffled feathers; and when they reached a neat cottage at the entrance of the village, she invited him in, and now she condescended to explain her plans to him.

"It's more than you deserve," she said, "but after racking my brains to think what I could do, it struck me that I might come here and set up a straw bonnet shop; so I've brought a few with me, and as I can turn and clean them, and know all about the business, I've taken this house, and to-morrow you'll see my name on a board outside—'Miss Elliott, straw bonnet-maker. N. B. Bonnets cleaned and turned.' What do you think of that?"

Philip did not know exactly what he thought of it. If she had received him warmly and affectionately, it is highly probable that he would have been so much flattered as to have thought very well of it; as it was, he did not feel so delighted as he

ought to have been at such a decided proof of regard; and he accordingly suggested difficulties, and hinted his apprehensions that she might not make a living in so small and insignificant a village as Combe. This want of gratitude and enthusiasm on his part, now displeased her; and they were very near quarrelling again; but at length, seeing she had got so far wrong with him, that to get right it was necessary to touch his feelings, she had recourse to tears and confession. She declared, that the manner in which she had received him, was all a joke; but owned that she had carried it too far, never supposing he would be offended; but if he was not glad to see her, he had only to say so, and she could return to London again; and although she *had* given up Mrs. Knox's situation, and so irretrievably offended that lady, she should not be at a loss, as Harvey and Graham wanted a person for the straw bonnet department; and had made applica-

tion to her, through Mr. Ferdinand Pycroft, to whom she could write on the subject that very evening.

This finale, which was in fact an *impromptu*, was a *coup de maitresse*. At the hated names of Harvey and Graham, which instantly suggested to his imagination the dreaded Mr. Ferdinand, invested with all his dangerous fascinations, he felt his blood stirred, and by the time she had finished her speech, she had accomplished her end. Philip was jealous again, and from being jealous he grew to be repentant and loving, and May was once more in the ascendant and the queen of his destiny. So they passed the remainder of the day together; but certain it was, that May's feelings towards her lover were not so lively as they should have been. There are ebbs and flows in all passions, and these tidal variations frequently depend on very subtle causes. In the present instance, May could not herself perhaps,

have told the cause of the chill that was over her. One thing was that the *grand coup de théâtre*, the first meeting, and Philip's, surprise had gone flatly off, owing to the unfortunate interlude of the pew-woman and the *beau cavalier*. Another depressing influence arose from the dulness of a village Sunday. Since she arrived, she had been too busy preparing for her little business, and anticipating the meeting with Philip, to feel weary ; but now she missed the walk in the park and the thronged streets, especially as she did not choose to go to afternoon service with her lover. She could not consent to so soon undeceiving the pew-woman, or encountering the *beau cavalier* when arm-in-arm with a rustic, so that altogether this first day of rural bliss was but an indifferent specimen, and certainly not worth coming so far to fetch.

One piece of intelligence that Philip gave her did, however, both astonish and interest

her, namely, that Lilly had again escaped the toils spread by her enemies; whilst he was equally surprised to find that she had wholly lost sight of her former companion. This circumstance of Lilly's absence, was also, perhaps, not without its effect, since it left her with nobody to be jealous of, and somewhat diminished the necessity she had imagined for her continued proximity and close supervision of his proceedings.

There are certain kinds of love to which a species of jealousy is absolutely necessary to give them a relish; and May's seemed to be of that quality.

## CHAPTER IX.

## HOW MAY PLAYS AWAY HER TREASURE.

NOTHING could have been more injudicious than the tone May's pride and caprice had given to the first meeting with her lover. She had certainly honoured him with a considerable proof of attachment in leaving London ; but to commence their new career with a quarrel, was tarnishing the glory and grace of the sacrifice. He had been extremely hurt by her behaviour ; the more so, as he had a slight suspicion that the elegant stranger, whose horse and groom were waiting at the church-door, had something to do with it. It is true, that betwixt her tears and the judicious use of Mr. Ferdinand Pycroft's detested

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name, she had brought him round to a more satisfactory state ; but, nevertheless, she had chilled that enthusiastic gratitude and devotion which her heroic exploit might otherwise have secured for her ; and which, had their bright pure flames been allowed to burn unchecked, might have induced him to make a corresponding sacrifice. Even on the ensuing Sunday, her vanity again got the better of her love ; and she preferred passing for a lady of quality, and sitting in the well-lined pew in the gallery, to which the still deluded pew-woman conducted her, to accompanying Philip to his seat below. She made the best she could of it now, certainly, by confessing, frankly, that it pleased her to be taken for a fine lady ; but this candour would probably have been more successful if she had practised it earlier. It could not now altogether efface the meanness with which she had disowned him on the first occasion. It was perhaps the un-

pleasant effect that this proceeding of hers had had on his mind, which enabled him to persevere, contrary to her wishes, in a plan he had formed for bringing his mother from London. Ever since she knew where he was, the old lady had been eager to return ; and he had been looking out for some small place, consistent with her very narrow means, which she might inhabit till he became master of the mill.

“ If your mother comes, I go,” said May.

“ I can’t disappoint my mother,” returned Philip ; “ she won’t interfere with you. Besides, if you can’t live in the same village with her, how will you live under the same roof ?”

May might have answered that she never intended to live under the same roof ; however, she had the prudence not to do so.

“ That will be different,” she said ; “ but now, you’ll see, she’ll take a dislike to me, and you’ll repent it ; mark my words if you



don't. I know very well what sort of a person she is—Lilly told me.”

“I don't think Lilly ever said any thing against my mother.”

“Oh, Lilly! no. Your mother's ways might do very well for Lilly, and Lilly's for her. Lilly could never say ‘Bo!’ to a goose, you know. But I'm very different. I have never been used to those stiff, stuck-up people; and I don't know how to behave to them. Besides, I'm sure London's a much better place for your mother.”

“But, May,” said Philip, “you didn't like staying in London after I had left it; and isn't it very natural my mother should feel the same. Besides, May, if you really love me, I should think you must respect my mother.”

“Yes, at a distance,” answered May; “but I'm sure if we come together we shall quarrel; and I think after I've given you such a proof of regard, you've no right to do any thing I don't like.”

"I don't wish to do any thing you don't like, May," answered Philip; "but I can't disappoint my mother. I've made her very unhappy already, and she's not in good health, and says London does not agree with her."

"Very well," answered May, "then you may take my cottage for her, if you like; for I shall be off, you may depend upon it."

"I've taken a place for her already," said Philip. "It's a very poor one; but Sir Lawrence says I may have it for nothing; and Westall, the wright, says he'll repair it, and make it habitable for her, without any charge, because it was my father that lent him money to set up in business."

"And where is it?" asked May.

"On the common, between the village and the mill. It's only a hut with two rooms; but it's dry, and there was furniture enough saved from the fire to fit it up."

This arrangement did not please May at

all ; she did not like the prospect of a divided influence ; and she had seen very clearly, ever since she came from London, that Philip was an altered man. He loved her still ; but he loved her more wisely—if it could be called wise to love her at all—in opening his eyes to his own faults he had become aware of hers too ; and terrified at the degree, and the kind of influence she had exercised over him—though he blamed himself for it and not her—he was firm now in retaining his own will and self-respect, and in not yielding to her wishes against his judgment ; and although he at first found considerable difficulty in resistance, it was a difficulty that diminished with every exertion of his resolution. In short, May and he changed places, in a great degree ; and he took the ascendancy which his qualities entitled him to, and which he ought to have had from the beginning ; but which his youth and inexperience, and her fascinations, had prevented his assuming.

The effect of this conduct on his part, as regarded May, was, that it disarmed her of her weapons. Her caprices, and her airs, and her hysterics, were of no use, their edges were blunted. The hysterics lasted longer than any thing else; for, like most men that are endued with a manly soul, Philip was soft-hearted to women, and exceedingly moved by their tears; but although, when he saw her in these convulsions he was very much distressed, and did his utmost to console her by tenderness, and convince her by argument, she by no means always gained her point—never, indeed, if he thought the matter one of importance. But still, though she became sensible of his power, and although these calm exhibitions of it enchained her fancy more and more, yet she had not the sense to see that her only chance of retaining his heart, was not to struggle for the ascendancy, but to yield a graceful and reasonable—we will not say obedience—but compliance.

So Philip worked on at the cottage, and with the assistance of the wright, made it tolerably comfortable; and when he thought it sufficiently aired, a precaution which he secured by lighting a fire, and sleeping there himself nightly, he sent for his mother, who, in spite of his great errors, was languishing to see him ; errors which, to one who knew little of such syrens as May, or of the temptations of London to a youth plunged suddenly into them, had appeared to argue a more entire perversion than had really existed. But when she saw the preparations made for her, and how tenderly, in spite of his humble means, he had cared for her comfort, and when he fell upon her neck and asked her forgiveness—and then when, with a steady voice and earnest countenance, he told her of his good resolutions for the future, adding, “ And I will keep them, mother, you may trust me now”—her soul rejoiced in him again, and the tears she shed were tears of sorrow no more.

May's threat of departure was not fulfilled; indeed, it was impracticable, for more reasons than one. In the first place, in spite of all her follies and faults, she was still in love with Philip; and although, when she fancied he was so much her slave, that she might venture to indulge her caprices, and do as she pleased with him, she frequently behaved as if she had no regard for him at all, yet the idea of losing him, or any coldness on his part, revived her passion in its full force; and actually leaving him, was a project she had never seriously entertained. In the next place, she had quitted London on the receipt of her quarter's salary, leaving her debts behind her, and to have appeared there so soon might have been inconvenient; but without this reason she could not have left him, unless there had been a railway station at Combe, and she had started in a fast train, within five minutes after a quarrel.

The Littenhaus family had now carried on

their illicit trade for some years, without discovery or suspicion. They had not grown rich upon it; the frequent losses and the uncertain profits precluded that. Indeed, their means had multiplied very little; still they clung to it; it was the way of life they had been brought up to, and there was a fascination about it, like drinking or gambling, that prevented even Ambrose from relinquishing its pursuit, though he did sometimes wish his lines had fallen in other places. As for Luke, he was fit for nothing better; danger and crime were his proper elements.

But although no suspicion had attached to any parties in particular, at least to none connected with the Littenhaus gang, the height to which smuggling was carried had occasioned an increased degree of vigilance on the part of the government. A preventive station was formed at Long Point, and several active men added to the force. With these men Philip became acquainted. Spirited

fellows, that had seen something of life and adventure, their conversation and stories amused him much more than the gossip of the village population, who had grown up on the soil where they were born, and could talk of little but hoeing and dibbling, and the last Sunday's sermon. There was one amongst them, called Wybrow, who was a particularly fine young man, handsome in person and enterprising in character ; agreeable, too, and good-tempered, provided his potations did not exceed small ale, but hot and quarrelsome in his cups. Aware of this failing, however, he rarely exposed himself to the danger ; and Philip, who was sobriety itself, and who took a great liking to him, was at once his friend and his monitor, as well as the ready companion of his recreations. It was not to be supposed that so brilliant an apparition as May Elliott could fail to make a considerable sensation in the village of Combe. When she alighted at the " Red



Lion," she was supposed to be a visitor on her way to the Hall; and Lacy had asked her if she did not want a post-chaise, or if the carriage would fetch her. When she took the cottage, it was concluded she was some fine lady, whom sorrow, or adversity, or a romantic taste, had driven into retirement. It was not till she had caused her name and calling to be inscribed over the door, that they brought down their excited imaginations to the plain fact, that this elegant vision made and cleaned straw bonnets. Even at the Hall, her advent was not unnoticed. First, Lady Longford's maid employed her to turn a bonnet for her, and next Lady L. herself bought a Dunstable, which May trimmed so neatly and simply—for she had an admirable taste in such matters—that she was pronounced quite a treasure, and might possibly have obtained permission to add to her inscription, "Purveyor of bonnets to her ladyship." Altogether, she did not want

custom; her neat cottage, agreeable manners, pretty person, and tasteful dressing, brought her both profit and patronage; and although the pew-woman left off calling her *my lady*, and putting her into the pew with the *gentle-folks*, she yet enjoyed deference and admiration enough to sustain her spirits and keep her in tolerable good humour.

Of course, this belle of the village was not unknown to the preventive men; and whilst they drank her health at their mess, they called Philip a lucky fellow. Wybrow, especially, admired her, and they sometimes accused him of wishing to supersede his friend; an imputation which he disowned, but which he did not altogether dislike. The truth was, that he was very much *épris* with May; and although he had no deliberate intention of wronging Philip, he had loose notions on such subjects, and was moreover, from his nature, thoughtless of consequences; embarking in enterprises, whether

of love or war, without reflecting much about what was to be their issue. Then May, who was equally thoughtless, could not help giving him some encouragement. She had no serious intentions of wronging Philip, more than Wybrow had; but it would have been contrary to her nature to have repressed the exhibition of the young sailor's admiration, and besides, she was of that class of women who consider a slight show of rivalry necessary to the maintenance of their influence. Mr. Ferdinand Pycroft was now *hors de combat*, and this gallant young preventive man was an excellent succedaneum.

There was, however, an openness about Wybrow's character and proceedings that disarmed Philip's suspicions, and baffled his penetration, added to which, he had become so sensible of his boyish irritability about the coxcomb "in the feather and flower department at Harvey's and Graham's," that

he had been admonishing himself severely against yielding to such follies for the future. He discerned, too, something of May's disposition to make him the toy of her humours; and resolved as he was, to act a manly part and redeem the past, he fortified himself to the utmost against idle doubts and jealousies. Had she not given him the most irrefragable proof of attachment by following him, and thereby showing that she cared nothing for the man she had almost driven him mad about? That Wybrow should admire her, was natural; that she liked admiration was her weakness; and his own part was to smile at both. Besides, if she really did not love him exclusively the sooner he knew it the better—much better before marriage than after. Thus argued Philip, under the influence of his reason and his firm resolve to be a man, and to act through life the part of one.

## CHAPTER X.

## THE CONFESSION OF HANS PEPPER.

It was a considerable time now since Mr. Cropley had been able to get, what he called *a new windmill*, for the general, and consequently the costs at the end of the year were not satisfactory. The starting a supposititious Miss Adams had not answered his expectations; the general had been too rash and May too restive. He found it a dangerous game, and prudently relinquished it before it had brought him into trouble. But something must be done; the cause must not be allowed to sleep; what should it be? It was whilst he was meditating on this curious

question, that he received a summons to attend the general on particular business.

“Well, sir,” said the great man, when Cropley was shown into the library. “Have you discovered any traces of my niece yet—Miss Isabel Adams?”

“No, sir,” replied Cropley, who had, in fact, never sought for her, nor ever supposed that the general seriously intended him to waste his time in so ineffectual a pursuit; “I am sorry to say my inquiries have been quite unsuccessful.”

“And how stands the suit?” inquired the general.

“They are still threatening to procure an order from his honour, the Vice Chancellor, for the production of the young lady in court, since we deny her being deceased; it was on that account, you recollect, I thought, last year, it might have been desirable to get some body to stand in the young lady’s shoes; it could have been of no ultimate

benefit; but it might have raised up difficulties and investigations, that your adversary could not have afforded to meet."

"I'll tell you what, sir," said the general, contemptuously, "you're like that man on the Manningtree Farm, that has been half ruining himself, digging for water whilst there was a fine spring close to his own door,—if he had only sought it in the right place—only, to be sure, the difference is, that he has been spending his own money, and you've been spending mine."

"You haven't really heard any thing to lead you to believe Miss Adams was not lost with the *Hastings*, sir: have you?"

"Yes, sir, I have heard something to lead me to believe Miss Adams was not lost with the *Hastings*," replied the general; who had indulged his vile humours till they boiled over on every unfortunate person that came within their scope, like Vesuvius, in an eruption.

"God bless me! That's very extraordinary!" exclaimed Mr. Copley, unfeignedly surprised; and unfeignedly vexed, too, that the discovery, if it were to be made, should not have been made by himself. I could never have thought it."

"No, sir, you would never have thought it; you were too much engaged in thinking how you could run up your bill of costs against Christmas, to think of doing my business."

"I'm sure, sir, I made every inquiry; but the thing seemed so entirely hopeless—but are you sure there is no mistake? No imposture in the case?"

"Read that," said the general, putting into his hand a very dirty scrap of paper, "and see what you can make of it."

Betwixt dirt, pale ink, bad writing, and worse spelling, it was not very easy to decipher the document; and whilst the general is walking up and down the room, and Crop-



ley, with a puzzled and mortified expression of face, is sitting in one corner of it, holding the paper extended before his eyes, and whilst trying to extract its meaning, at the same time racking his brains to determine how it would be most advantageous to himself to act in this emergency—whether to give in to the imposition—for such he had, no doubt it was—or vindicate his own fidelity and perspicacity by unmasking it—we will take the opportunity of narrating the history of this scrap of soiled paper to the reader.

It will be remembered, that amongst the early visitors to the “Black Huntsman,” was a man called Hans Peffer. Hans was a German by birth, and had once been a respectable man in a decent line of business, as a seller of tobacco in all its various forms, in Exeter. He had a wife whom he dearly loved—a beautiful young Englishwoman—and five children, two girls and three boys, on

whom he doted. It might have been hoped, that such tender domestic relations would have been sufficient to keep Hans from risking the welfare of these beloved ones, by any rash, much less illegal, speculations; but, unfortunately, his very best feelings led him into error. He was ambitious for his children, and wanted to do better for them than the limited profits of his little trade afforded. In an evil hour, therefore, he resolved to make a bold stroke for a fortune. He pulled down part of his house, threw out a handsome shop-front, laid in a stock of curious goods in his line, including sundry showy meerschaums and hookahs, called his place an emporium, and advertised largely. But the unimpressible citizens of Exeter could not be brought to develop a true German relish for Hans Pepper's wares. They used no more snuff or tobacco than they had done before—at least, with the exception of a few foolish young men, who were ensnared by

the strange sinuosities and the gold tassels of the hookahs and meerschaums. Hans got into difficulties, and as such traders were the natural allies of the smugglers, and *vice versa*, the gang of which old Jacob Littenhaus was one of the chief leaders, found him out, and, although unwillingly enough at first, he ultimately entered into dealings with them. But this expedient was a straw to a drowning man, and could not save him; he became a bankrupt—lost his character; and from one descending grade to another, fell at last to be a mere receiver and agent of these illicit traffickers. Still, in the midst of his depravation, his love for his wife and children continued undiminished, and he would risk any adventure, or undergo any privations himself, to procure them comforts. He was no sailor, but as he could speak German and Dutch, he was often taken to sea with them, because he was of use on the other side of the water; and it thus happened that Hans Pepper was in the cutter the morning that the

smugglers boarded the wreck of the *Hastings*; but it had been a fearful night, the wind was scarcely lulled, and the sea was still flinging up its wild waves to the sky, and Hans, being a landsman, did not like the idea of approaching the sinking ship in the little cock boat, that was tossing madly about on the raging waters below, and into which the smugglers were eagerly leaping. So he remained on board the vessel, but, unfortunately, for his own peace of mind, near enough to witness all that took place on the wreck. He saw the murder, and beheld, with a breathless interest, the debate about the child, the purport of which he easily guessed—especially, when he saw it terminated by old Jacob snatching her up in his arms, and leaping into the boat with her. It was the first and the last blood poor Hans had ever seen spilled, and it made an indellible impression on his mind. His humanity and his conscience took the alarm, when, by this instance, he perceived the crimes and barbarities to which he might

be made a party, by the desperate band with whom he had allied himself, and from which he could not get disentangled without subjecting his wife and children to utter destitution. So he hung on to them, but timid, suspicious, and miserable; he shrank from joining their expeditions, and soon lost their confidence. Misfortune pursued him, too, in his domestic relations; his wife, and then his children died one after the other, two of the latter under very painful circumstances; and as he wept over the graves of these dear departed ones, Hans believed that they had died for his sins; and setting aside the poor father's theological view of the case, he was, probably, not far wrong; for, under happier external circumstances, these young vines, and their parent stem, might have lived and flourished. Reckless and hopeless now, Hans became indifferent to his own fate here, or hereafter. He sank lower and lower; sought to drown his cares in strong potations, and, betwixt that

practice and much nightly exposure to cold and wet, he was seized with an illness that brought him into the Exeter infirmary, where he did not die, but so far recovered as to be dismissed and transferred to the poor house; and here, having lingered in weak health for some months, he expired after a few hours' suffering. It was almost in his last moments, when remorse and terror had full possession of him, that he communicated to a fellow pauper, named Abrahams, to whom the charge of watching him had been committed, some details of the boarding of the *Hastings* and the murder of the sole survivor found on the wreck, with the exception of a child, whose life had been spared, requesting him to give information of the circumstance to some person in authority. Intending to fulfil the injunction, the trustee of this important secret, as soon as he had an opportunity, noted down the particulars he had received, to the best of his power, but with the omission of dates, names, and locali-

ties, which had escaped his memory; so that when he presented himself before a magistrate with the intimation that he had something important to communicate, it was found impossible to make any use of the information. The man was dismissed, and no further attention paid to the subject.

But a bit of paper often survives through as many adventures and vicissitudes as might make a three volume novel; and the one on which the substance of Hans Peffer's confession had been noted down, was not destined to perish without fulfilling its mission; at least in some degree. Finding it ineffective to the purpose designed, and therefore not likely to bring him the handsome reward which he had expected, Abrahams set no further value on his manuscript, and it reposed in his pocket, unthought of, till he wanted a bit of paper to wrap some tobacco in—and this office it fulfilled for some time—till one day he tore off half of the sheet for Abel White, whose

stock of that unfragrant consolation being exhausted, had begged him to accommodate him with a little for present use.

As people in poor houses have nothing to spare, Abel did not fling away the paper when its contents were exhausted, but smoothing and folding it, he kept it in his pocket till fortune might bring him a fresh supply of tobacco or snuff—and it so happened that one day, when his daughter was paying him a visit, he drew it out with his pocket-handkerchief. Martha picked it up, and seeing some writing on it, she spread out the paper on her lap, to read what it was about—and as her eye ran listlessly over the lines, it was suddenly arrested by the following words:

“Went away, and took child with 'em, cald her dawson, or lawson, can't remember wich—pertended she war ther cosin — and one on 'em marred her, or wanted to—suppose to be sumbody of consekence cumd from Indy ship lost on——”



"Listen to this, father," said Martha.

"Where did you get that?" asked Abel, when she had read it; "what does it mean?"

"I don't know," replied Martha, "it's on the paper you just dropped. Where did *you* get it?"

"I got that from Abrahams," returned Abel, after feeling it to ascertain what it was. "Read it again."

"I should like to ask Abrahams about it," said Abel, when he heard the paragraph a second time; "when I see him, I'll speak to him about it;" for, like most blind men, Abel always talked of seeing.

"It made me think of Lilly," said Martha.

"I often think of her, poor thing!" said Abel, "and wonder what could have happened to her that night—some mischief, I'm afraid."

"Unless she really had set the room on fire, and then run away," said Martha.

"Not she," said Abel; "no, I'm afraid

it was her money that got her into some trouble; and I've always thought that the girl we heard had been found in the river next day was she. I wish you had gone to look at the body."

"I was just too late," answered Martha, "they had just buried her."

"I have often thought there was something odd about those cousins of hers, from different things she told me," said Abel.

"Do you remember their name?" asked Martha.

"It was a foreign name," said Abel, "but I should know it if I heard it."

All that Abrahams knew, or could recollect respecting the contents of the paper, he willingly communicated to Abel, adding however, that from the imperfect information no use could be made of it. But by judicious interrogation, Abel extracted a sufficient portion of the dying sinner's confession to awaken in his own mind considerable

interest. Abrahams remembered that it was to the effect that a child had been taken off the wreck of a ship supposed to be from India ; that a gentleman had been murdered and robbed of jewels and money ; that the pirates had removed and taken the child with them to a distant part of the coast—and on being asked if the name of Luke had been mentioned, he remembered that it had.

Now Abel had frequently heard Lilly allude to a long journey she had made with her cousins ; and to some faint recollections she had of once being in a large ship ; then the name of *Luke* and the marriage, were remarkable coincidences ; so that on the whole he thought the matter sufficiently important to be communicated to somebody better able to weigh its significance than they were, and they naturally fixed on Mr. Ross, from the circumstances of Lilly's being known to him, and because he was the only professional person Martha had access to.

But poor Lilly's unfortunate *escapade*, and subsequent disappearance, had not prepos-  
sessed the family in her favour. Mrs. Janet  
had comfortably settled herself into the very  
worst opinion of her ; and Mrs. Ross had  
never quite forgiven her the danger to which  
she had exposed her children. Mr. Ross him-  
self knew nothing about her, but it was very  
natural that he should adopt the opinion of  
those that he imagined did ; so that alto-  
gether he was by no means disposed to be-  
lieve that his late under nursery-maid was a  
princess in disguise, or the heroine of a ro-  
mantic tale of shipwreck and murder. Be-  
sides, Hans Peffer was dead, and could give  
no further information on the subject ; pro-  
bably Lilly was dead, too, as the girl found  
in the river had been buried unowned ; and  
finally, so obscure an indication as *Dawson*  
or *Lawson*, amounted to nothing at all.  
Thus opined Mr. Ross ; and there, to Abel's  
extreme disappointment, the matter ended  
for some time.

It was some months after this that Mr. Ross, being on his way to London, made arrangements for passing a night at the house of his former clerk, Mr. Treadgold, for the purpose of discussing some matters in which they were mutually concerned. "And how do you get on with my old client, the General?" asked Mr. Ross, as they sat after dinner with their bottle of claret before them.

"As well as can be expected," said Mr. Treadgold, with a laugh—"you know the general's wife is now the general."

"And some people say, dairy-maid though she was, that she is much more fit to be so than he," answered Mr. Ross.

"So she is," returned the other, "her temper is not of the best, certainly, but she has a great deal more principle than he has, and she has sense enough to see through him, and to despise him accordingly."

"And how goes on the grand suit?" inquired Mr. Ross laughing.

"Oh! I don't know," returned Mr. Treadgold, "I've nothing to do with that—I washed my hands of it long ago. It's a rascally business, I fancy."

"But does he go on with it?" asked Mr. Ross.

"Oh! yes, I believe so. Cropley conducts the cause, so you may judge what sort of a concern it is."

"But what is their plea? what do they allege against the will? I thought the verdict must have settled that for ever."

"So it did," returned Mr. Treadgold, "Colonel Adams left India in the full persuasion that he was about to take possession of the fortune; but he found himself out of the frying-pan into the fire."

"How so?" inquired Mr. Ross.

"Why, they raised up another question respecting the decease of the heiress—the child that was lost with the *Hastings*."

"But how can they maintain the suit on

that ground? I thought it was satisfactorily proved that every body on board perished, crew and passengers."

"So it was always understood," returned Mr. Treadgold; "but a suit may be maintained to the day of judgment, when one party has no principle and the other no money. Betwixt folly and malignity, the General's half mad; and Cropley thinks of nothing but his own pocket; any scheme's good enough for him that will fill that. It isn't long since it was reported that they were actually bringing up and educating some girl, that they meant to produce as the heiress; but the scheme blew up, somehow or other."

"I wonder," said Mr. Ross, after a little reflection, "whether a thing that was brought before me lately, was any part of that scheme."

"I shouldn't wonder; for I believe there certainly was something of the sort in agitation."

“The thing I allude to was a bit of paper, purporting to be the dying confession of a pirate. It was to the effect that a child had been taken from the wreck of an India ship, and brought up as the relation of some of the gang, who had robbed and murdered the survivors or survivor, I forget which, that had escaped drowning.”

“It looks very like it,” observed Mr. Treadgold.

“It was brought to me,” continued Mr. Ross, “by the daughter of one of the paupers in the poor-house, because I had had a girl in my service called Dawson, which was the name mentioned in the paper.”

“The name of the girl?”

“The name the pirates were supposed to have given her.”

“But what connexion could they make out betwixt your servant and the child found on the wreck?”

“Why, it seems that the people who re-



commended her to us, had met with her under some peculiar circumstances ; and they fancied that there were some coincidences betwixt her history and the events alluded to in the pauper's confession. But, however, be that as it may, it's now, I fancy, of very little consequence ; for Lilly Dawson, the girl who lived with us, turned out but so-so ; she ran away, and, I suspect, threw herself into the river."

"Was her name *Lilly*?" inquired Mr. Treadgold.

"It was," returned Mr. Ross.

"That's odd, too," said the other ; "for I perfectly well remember seeing a letter from Mrs. Adams, which arrived here before the loss of the ship was known in India, in which she called the child *Lilly*."

"That has been part of the plot," rejoined Mr. Ross ; "depend on it, Cropley knew that as well as you."

"Very true," replied Mr. Treadgold, who

had been momentarily excited by the coincidence of the name: "no doubt he did; and it has been a deeper laid scheme than I was aware of."

And here would have ended all interest and inquiry about Lilly Dawson, had it not happened that our old friend Tom Watts, who, in the interim, had returned to the service of Mr. Treadgold, chanced to be putting some coals on the dining-room fire, at that very critical period of the conversation, when the disappearance and probable drowning of Lilly Dawson was mentioned by Mr. Ross.

Tom disposed the coals with careful exactness, and swept up the ashes with a degree of neatness quite exemplary, whilst he opened his ears to this discourse; hesitating, the while, whether to speak or not: but recollecting, that though in the room, he had no business to hear or understand the conversation of his betters, he forbore, and departed in silence. It was not in human nature,

however, to keep such a secret; so he relieved himself by narrating below, how the gentlemen up-stairs were talking of a girl called Lilly Dawson, whom he knew; and how, whilst they were supposing her drowned, she was working in London, at Mrs. Knox's; and how, moreover, that very girl had, on one of Mrs. Treadgold's former journeys, been her fellow-traveller to London.

We need not say that, in due course of time, this story reached the destination Tom intended it for; the housemaid told Mrs. Treadgold, whilst she was fastening her dress; and Mrs. Treadgold told her husband; but the latter was now so possessed with the idea of Cropley's scheme, and of this being a part of it, that he paid little attention to the information, till a slight corroborating circumstance directed his mind again to the subject. A suit, in which he was employed to obtain evidence respecting the sale of some property in Cornwall, at a former period, obliged him

to refer to the newspapers of that date; and whilst looking over one, called "The Falmouth News-letter," his eye was attracted by a short paragraph to the following effect :

"It is reported that some fishermen who boarded the wreck of the *Hastings*, before she went to pieces, observed traces of bloodshed on the planks. This rumour has given rise to a suspicion that this unfortunate vessel may have been attacked by an enemy, before she entered the Channel."

Here was certainly a sort of corroboration of one part of the confession; namely, that the ship had been boarded by pirates, and a murder committed; and Mr. Treadgold thought it worth while to endeavour to obtain the paper Mr. Ross had mentioned; which by the aid of the latter gentleman was soon in his possession; for Abel White, not being by any means fully satisfied that it did not refer in some way to Lilly, in whom, whether dead or alive, he still felt a deep interest, had care-

fully treasured it. It was this paper which, with such particulars as he had collected, Mr. Treadgold had forwarded to the General, that the latter had now placed before the astonished eyes of Mr. Cropley.

“A very strange, and I should say, suspicious-looking document,” observed the latter, holding the paper up to the window to examine the water-mark, by the way of exhibiting great acuteness.

“What do you see suspicious about it?” inquired the General.

“The writing and the spelling are too bad to be natural,” said Cropley.

“Nothing’s too bad to be natural, sir,” returned the General. “The worse any thing is, the more natural it is,” which favourite axiom of the General’s embodied his real opinion in regard to human nature, whilst it now conveniently served as a sarcasm against Mr. Cropley.

“I should be very glad to believe that

paper authentic, I am sure, sir," returned the lawyer; "but what evidence is it? What's the use of it?"

"The use of it, sir, is to let us know that my niece was not lost with the ship—that she survived the wreck; and that if we seek her, perhaps we may find her;" and the General then proceeded to inform Mr. Cropley, though in the most ungracious manner, and mingling every sentence with bitterness and reproof, that a girl called Lilly Dawson, whose history seemed to be enveloped in some obscurity, had within a few years, been living in that part of the country. "And now, sir, it remains to trace what became of that girl. Mr. Treadgold has ascertained that she had left the place where she first found employment, but where she went afterwards, they do not know."

"It shall be my business, sir, to inquire," answered Mr. Cropley, perceiving that whether Lilly Dawson were a real or fictitious

personage, it was the General's pleasure for the present to believe in her existence; and, at all events, the hunting for her, might not be an unprofitable pursuit.

He, accordingly, went to London, and easily learnt all the Watts family or Mrs. Knox could tell; and he also visited both of May Elliott's lodgings; at the first of which he learnt, that Lilly had departed in a hackney-coach one night, with her friend, and had never returned; but of her subsequent movements he could discover nothing. Neither could he ascertain what had become of May herself, after she quitted Blenheim Street; nor was it likely, since she went away in debt, that she intended to leave any marks by which to track her steps. This circumstance rendered him delicate in his dealings with regard to her. It was not his interest to offend or bring her into difficulties; for she knew of more things than one, whereby she might have repaid his injuries with interest.

He, therefore, forbore to advertise her, a measure he adopted with respect to Lilly, though unsuccessfully; because nobody in the world knew any thing about her, but the family with whom she was living; and there none saw the advertisement but herself. As we have said, it was her office to read the papers to her master; and when she did so, it was rarely that either Mrs. Adams or Frederick looked at them. The former took little interest in any part of their contents except the fashionable intelligence, or the announcement of a new novel; and Freddy was too busy with his lessons to have much time for extraneous reading.

It was thus that the only person who both read the advertisements and was able to give the information desired, was the one most deeply concerned in the matter; but terrified at the sight of what she concluded to be a scheme of Luke's to get her again in his power, she took care to despatch the papers to their



further destination, immediately she had read them; thus rendering Mr. Cropley's exertions unavailing, and inducing him to suppose that the girl who had appeared under the name of Lilly Dawson, was either no longer in existence, or that she had been an impostor, connected with some project of May Elliott's; who for aught he knew might have actually been acquainted with what she said she was, namely, who the parties were for whom he had been seeking a supposititious heiress.

## CHAPTER XI.

## SYMPTOMS OF MAY'S LOSING THE GAME.

It may be conceived, that the preventive force stationed at Long Point very seriously interfered with the convenience of the Littenhaus family. Amongst the rest, Wybrow was especially obnoxious to them by his activity; and it augmented Luke's hatred of Philip not a little, that these two young men should be so much together. Indeed, it was to him an exceedingly dangerous intimacy. A very slight hint from Philip might have put Wybrow on the right track for a discovery, which they were all seeking to make, regarding some late proceedings on that coast; and had Philip been more suspicious and ob-

serving, he could not have failed to make the discovery himself. From certain accidents that had occurred, Luke hardly knew how to believe in his ignorance, and had consequently actually grown to fear him so much, that he had been trying to conciliate his good-will by civility; though, in his heart, he detested him with a treble-distilled hatred, which every month that brought nearer the period when he would have a right to claim the mill, rendered more bitter.

In the meantime, although this circumstance was not yet known to Luke, Philip and Wybrow were not altogether the good friends they had been. May had got piqued, at finding she could not make Philip jealous so easily as formerly; and in order to vindicate her power and her charms, she set seriously to work to render him so: and, unfortunately, in spite of his good resolutions, she succeeded too well.

"May," he said to her one day, after an

exhibition of levity on the part of his mistress, that had awakened in his own breast a severe struggle betwixt his judgment and his infatuation—the former whispering him to be free, for that she was not worth the pangs she was inflicting, whilst the latter rendered him the chained victim of her tyrannous folly—“May,” he said, “you’ll be sorry for this some day; yet I don’t know why I should say so—if you loved me enough to be sorry, you wouldn’t do it.”

“Do what?” asked May.

“Give the encouragement you do to Wybrow.”

“I don’t give him any particular encouragement,” she answered. “I am not obliged to be rude to a man, because he admires me, am I?”

“Admires you, May? He thinks you a very pretty woman, I dare say; so, doubtless does that ragged boy that brought the firewood here just now; but is that any reason you should encourage him to tell you so?”

"But you don't compare Harry Wybrow to that wretch, do you?" said May. "Let me tell you, Harry's a very nice young man."

"I admit it," answered Philip; "but let me tell *you*, May, that to a woman who really and truly loves *one* man, the admiration of others, nice or otherwise, is of very little value, and certainly not worth angling for."

"I don't angle for it," she replied, sharply; "there's no occasion for that."

"You do all you can to excite, instead of repressing it," returned Philip. "I believe it's more thoughtlessness than mischief on the part of Wybrow," he added, "and therefore I don't want to quarrel outright with him, if I can help it; but—"

"Well, but what?" asked May. "You're going to threaten to swallow him up alive, I suppose?"

"Oh no, I'm not going to threaten any thing," said Philip. "If your own heart does not warn you, my threats would be of little use."

“Warn me of what, I should like to know?” answered May. “I don’t see any thing so fierce about you, for my part, that I need be frightened at; nor Wybrow either, for that matter.”

“Very well, May,” returned Philip, turning very pale, “you must do as you please—may you never have cause to repent it!”

This is but a sample of the sort of scenes that passed between the lovers weekly, sometimes daily, and it would be doing Philip great injustice to say that they were without their effect. His reason was growing gradually stronger, and his infatuation weaker. He saw how base, how mean, how selfish a thing it was thus to indulge her vanity at his expense; and yet he pitied her too, for he did not believe she cared for Wybrow, and it was often less jealousy, than anger at this paltering with the truth—this mingling of a profane mask with so holy a thing as love—that irritated and vexed him; whilst, with respect to

Wybrow himself, his feeling was not so much that of rivalry as of indignation, at his wantonly perilling a woman's happiness to gratify a passing fancy.

"Oh, May!" he said to her one day, "May you never live to feel the want of what now you don't know the value of!"

"What's that?" asked May; "a pretty face? Oh, I know the value of it very well, I can tell you; and I mean to keep it too, as long as I can."

"No, May," returned Philip; "it's what would have lasted you much longer than your bright eyes, or your silken hair, or your white teeth."

"Then you do admit that I *have* bright eyes, and silken hair, and white teeth," said May, smiling, more pleased with the compliment than impressed by the seriousness of his manner; "for I'm sure it's a long time since I heard you own as much. I wouldn't say thank ye for a lover that never pays one a compliment."

"The greatest compliment I could pay you, was to love you, May," answered Philip.

"And it's your love, I suppose, that I'm to regret the loss of?" she said, haughtily.

"It's the love of one honest heart, May, that I was hoping you might never live to feel the want of," answered Philip.

"Pooh!" said May, flinging away. "I hate people that are always preaching and threatening."

"Lilly would not have said that. Lilly would not have acted so," were thoughts that often glanced through Philip's mind now, as he sighed at the future that lay before him, and yet knew not how to break his chains; and it is probable that his heart would have returned much more decidedly to his first love had he not felt that with all the charm of Lilly's ardent affections and singleness of heart, there was a want of culture, nay, even of the commonest rudiments of



education, that somewhat incapacitated her for being his companion, improved as he was himself; for his sufferings and his experience had awakened his intellect and developed his character; and even his intercourse with May—the constant abrasion of his mind against hers, had tended to ripen and strengthen his understanding. With respect to culture, properly so called, it is true, she had none; but she had the rudiments of education, and her natural quickness and independence of character, together with her knowledge of the world—in the common acceptation of that phrase—had served her in good stead with a man some years younger than herself; and they might have served her still if she could have been true to her own affections; for Philip was right in believing that it was himself, and not Wybrow that she loved. But she played false with herself for her lover's heart, as many a woman does; the worst part of her nature against the best, and lost the stake.

In the meantime, Philip's mother in her lone cottage on the Heath, was happier than she had ever expected to be again; for though very poor, being rent-free, she was able to live. Lady Longford did not forget her; old Lacy, the innkeeper would sometimes send her a little present of vegetables from his garden, and Philip was all attention and duty. May, even May, sometimes prompted by her better angel, would melt Philip's heart and banish her faults from his remembrance by some little attention to old Rachel—old we call her, for though not so old in years, the misfortunes that had overtaken her, had broken her health and spirits, and she had become prematurely aged. It was scarcely possible that two people so antagonistic in nature as she and May, could like each other, or that they could have lived together a week in harmony. Philip had become fully aware of their utter incongruity, and had long demolished all the *châteaux en Espagne* which he

erected on so shallow a foundation, as the hope of May's conformity; but he had from his childhood entertained a devoted love for his mother, and nothing appeased him so quickly when he had reason to be displeased with his mistress, as any evidence of respect for the old woman. . A straw bonnet of her own making, neatly trimmed with black crape, which she once presented to her, balanced and obliterated a whole month's ill-behaviour that had very nearly completed Philip's alienation and offended him beyond redemption.

In spite of these little attentions, however, they were mutually too conscious of their unsuitableness, to seek each other's society. May in her heart disliked Mrs. Ryland exceedingly; and Mrs. Ryland both disliked and feared May—she feared her for Philip's sake—for though he had never confessed it, she now believed her to have been the cause of all his errors; and although she saw clearly

that that phasis of her son's life was past, and that he could never again be so drawn aside from his true orbit by any erratic star, yet she foresaw either endless misery in a union with such a woman, if it ever took place, or great pain to Philip, and perhaps even to May, if it did not. But aware that these dangers are often rather expedited than averted by too much interference, and that bonds wrenched whilst there is yet life in them, will fester, she waited, hoping that their vitality being destroyed by time and circumstances, they might fall off by their own dead weight, and Philip find himself once more free.

## CHAPTER XII.

## AN ALARM AT THE COTTAGE ON THE HEATH.

SINCE the establishment of his mother in her cottage on the heath, Philip generally passed the night there. Occasionally Luke, for some reason or other kept him away—but these were exceptions—and on a Saturday evening Rachel always reckoned securely on enjoying his company to sup with her.

At the particular period we refer to in our present chapter, old Rachel was suffering some uneasiness about her son. She had clearly discerned that his mind was depressed and unhappy; or, at least, uneasy. He was less with her—seemed to seek solitude—and

was often so lost in thought, that he was not aware when she spoke to him. But, influenced by the respect and consideration that his late conduct had inspired her with, she forbore to press into his confidence, and waited till he should be disposed to give it her of his own accord. The truth was, that poor Philip was in the heart of a struggle about May—a struggle with himself, not with her—for the last was a conflict in which, finding himself beaten, he had relinquished. But the question of the future was becoming imperative. Every day brought him nearer to that period which would see him master of the mill, when he had looked to taking home his wife and his mother. That the two were incompatible, he had long decided; and had May given him no cause for dissatisfaction in other respects, he would have abandoned the latter project for her sake; but it had now become an urgent question, whether the first part of the plan must not be resigned, in-

stead of the last. May's unfitness to make him happy, or to be happy herself in the situation he would have to place her in, was so palpable, that not only for his own sake, but for hers, he saw the necessity of breaking off the engagement; but his honour and good sense made him feel acutely the deep responsibility of such an act, at least he could not do it lightly, nor without an entire moral conviction of the necessity of the step, as regarded the welfare of both parties. He knew that vows exchanged and promises given were holy things, even though yet unratified by the church, and he could not fling them to the winds with careless levity. He knew that *words* were *things* that cannot be trampled on without crushing life out somewhere. Trust dies, and our confidence in loyal human dealing perishes on the desecrated altar of human faith. Still, that there are occasions where the rupture of such an engagement is of less evil than the mainte-

nance of it, he was well aware; and it was the careful weighing of his own particular case, impressed as he was with the deep responsibility of the decision that now so engrossed his mind; and it was scarcely possible for him to doubt that the moral defects of May Elliott's character would justify the disruption, both to his own conscience and in the opinion of his friends. So far for himself; but then when he thought of May, his heart misgave him. It was not only her disappointment, although he was well aware that, in spite of all her levity, that would be considerable, but it was the apprehension of what might be the effects of it on her subsequent career: there was no saying what follies and imprudences her wounded feelings and mortified pride might drive her into. This was the great source of his present anxiety and hesitation; for as regarded the immediate pain on both sides, he was clear that that was far preferable to the imminent risk of long years of future repentance.



It was on a dreary Saturday evening in the month of November, that old Rachel sat by her dim fire-light, thinking of these things, and wishing the conflict were over; whilst she listened for the music of his foot upon her threshold, wondering that Philip was not yet come, and what could have detained him. Her bit of supper was on the table, with one of her own white aprons spread under it for a cloth; and her candle was ready to light, as soon as she heard his hand upon the latch; for although, from economy, she sat in the dark herself, she always expended a candle when he supped with her, that she might enjoy the pleasure of beholding his young face. But he came not; and after waiting and hoping till ten o'clock, a late hour with her primæval habits, she arose from her seat; and having first looked out upon the murky night, and listened, for some minutes, to the deep silence that surrounded her, she closed her door, removed her supper to the little cup-

board that formed her larder, and retired disappointed to bed.

When she awoke again, it was still dark; nor did she very well know what it was that had awakened her, although she was conscious that her waking was not merely accidental; so that instead of instantly seeking to forget herself again in sleep, she rather sought to rouse herself into perfect wakefulness; and presently, whilst so doing, she heard a slight sound, as of some one moving outside her door. Perhaps it was Philip; and she was just stepping out of bed to admit him, when the recollection of her lonely situation, and the possibility that it might not be he, arrested her, and she paused to listen again; and now she was sure she heard receding footsteps; so that it had either been some one else, or he had gone away from the fear of disturbing her. She had half a mind to get up and call him back; but the apprehension that it might be some other visitor, deterred her;

and so after listening a little longer in case he should return, she tried to sleep again ; and she had partly succeeded in her efforts, when she was aroused by a sound like a dog scratching against the door.

“ Who’s there ? ” cried Rachel ; no voice answered ; but presently the scratch was repeated with a very low whine ; and now the old woman, who did not want nerve, resolved to rise and penetrate the mystery. It might only be some poor animal in distress ; but even so, Rachel was willing to give it shelter. Before opening the door she would have lighted her candle ; but the fire was out, and to find her tinder-box and strike a light, was too tedious a process for her impatience, so she opened it at once ; asking again, “ Who’s there ? ” But no one answered ; and as there was not a gleam in the sky to penetrate the thick atmosphere, she could discern nothing ; and she was just about to close the door again, concluding that it was some strayed animal

that had wandered away again, when she felt something rubbing against her foot, and on stooping down to ascertain what it was, her hand alighted on a human body.

“ Philip! oh, Philip!” she cried, for that it was her son she never doubted—“ What has happened? Are you ill? Are you hurt?”

But there was no answer; and now with frantic eagerness, Rachel returned into the room and sought her tinder-box. How long it seemed till she could find it! How long, till the feeble spark sufficed to light her candle and she could inspect those features—those features that were dearer than all the earth contained to her? Was it he? Was it the pride of her happier days? The prop and stay of her adversity? No; the dead man, for so he appeared, wore the dress of a sailor; and the features were those of Wybrow, the young preventive man. Besides him stood a small terrier, which she had often observed crossing the common at his heels.

This was most strange! Wybrow at her door, dead! For though the body was still warm, and although she had certainly distinguished footsteps but a few minutes before, he showed no signs of life. He had either fainted or had expired. She fetched water and sprinkled his face, and lifting up his head poured some down his throat; but he neither stirred nor spoke. What was she to do? He might not be dead; and it was shocking to leave him there on the cold stone, even though she sat by and watched him: so she must try to drag him into the room; a feat which with some difficulty she accomplished; then she lighted her fire, and stretching him before it, she endeavoured by warmth and friction to restore animation, but in vain; and whilst she was busy about him in this way, she discovered the probable cause of his death or insensibility; namely, a fearful fracture on the back part of his head, which appeared to be quite beaten in, whilst the hair was

matted by the blood that had exuded from the wound.

When Rachel was exhausted by her ineffectual efforts to revive the young sailor, she stretched him decently on the hearth, made up her fire afresh, and set herself down beside him, to watch and to reflect. Who could have done this murder?—and how came the victim to her door? Unless the injuries had been inflicted on him very near her cottage, it was not likely he would himself select so unhopeful a place for aid or protection; besides, on consideration, she could not believe that he had walked there; for if able to do that, he might have given some more audible signal of his presence. Moreover, she was satisfied that she had heard a footstep; not that of a dying man, staggering to her door, but a firm, heavy step, receding from it. Somebody, consequently, must have brought him there. Who? and for what purpose? In this inquiry she was lost. That Wybrow,

or any other man in that service, should be murdered, was not perhaps very extraordinary. They must have enemies, who would be glad to put them out of the way; but she was not aware of any motive that could induce the assassin to bring his victim to her threshold. And thus wondering and amazed, beholding with pitying and reverent eyes the poor remnant of mortality that lay at her feet, with his dog, who had anxiously watched her proceedings, stretched beside him, Rachel sat till morning. When the dawn broke she arose, and having spread a sheet over the body, she put on her bonnet and shawl, locked her door, and started for the village, to give notice of what had occurred.

## CHAPTER XIII.

## THE GAME LOST.

It was a cold wintry morning ; a thick mist hung in the air ; and long before Rachel had reached the village, her clothes were as wet as if it had rained ; but her mind was too intent on her errand to care for such matters ; and she trudged on, assisted by her stick, as fast as her feeble limbs would permit. She had forgotten, however, in her eagerness, that being Sunday morning and very early, probably nobody would have risen ; and she was only reminded of this by seeing that the shutters of every house were still closed. It was to Mr. Lacy that Rachel intended to apply for advice ; but even the " Red Lion "



showed no signs of life; and not liking to disturb the slumbers of the good man about a matter in which he had no concern, she resolved to go on to Mr. Blackburn, the surgeon, who resided at the other end of the village. Indeed, on reflection, it appeared to her that he was the most proper person to address herself to, as the sooner he visited the wounded man the better, in the case of life not being extinct; so thither she directed her steps.

As she approached the surgeon's residence, she found that the silence that pervaded all the rest of the village was far from prevailing in that quarter. The house was open; and before it stood two of the preventive men, and half a dozen other persons, men and women, who had turned out of the neighbouring cottages; they were all talking eagerly together; and ever and anon casting inquiring glances over to that side of the house where the laboratory was situated.

When they saw Rachel approaching, there was a general movement amongst them; they all simultaneously fell back and made way for her; and there was something in the manner in which this was done, that struck her with a sudden and undefinable presentiment of evil; insomuch, that that which had before filled her mind passed from it, to give place to other anxieties.

"Don't let her see it," said a woman to Walsh, the preventive man.

"What is it?—what's the matter?" inquired Rachel.

"I don't think it's any thing serious," returned one of the sailors; "there's no need to be alarmed; but you'd better go in and see him yourself."

"See who?" asked Rachel, staring at the man, with terror in her countenance.

"Don't you know that your Philip is in there with the surgeon?" returned the speaker, surprised at her question, since he naturally

accounted for her appearance there, by supposing that she was come in search of her son.

“My Philip!” she exclaimed, as she turned to ascend the steps. “My Philip here!” she murmured to herself, “and Wybrow lying dead on my hearthstone!”

The laboratory door, which was on the right of the hall, being open, she entered at once; and there, sure enough, in a small room adjoining it, lay Philip on a sofa, pale, but quite sensible, and evidently very glad to see her. He had just been bled; and the surgeon was binding up his arm.

“Mother!” he said, with a faint smile. “How did you get here so soon?”

But poor Rachel was so overcome by surprise and consternation at this strange coincidence, that she was obliged to support herself against the counter, quite unable to speak.

“Give Mrs. Ryland a chair,” said the sur-

geon to his assistant. "You have no cause for alarm," he added, addressing her; "it is only a contusion, and he will be quite well in a few days, I have no doubt."

But this information did not appear to afford Rachel all the consolation that might have been expected. She still sat speechless on the chair into which she had dropped, with her eyes expressing terror and inquiry, fixed on Philip's face.

"Don't be frightened, mother!" said he, in a low voice. "It's nothing at all."

"Nothing to create alarm, I assure you, Mrs. Ryland," repeated the surgeon; and he handed her a glass of water and some sal volatile. "I must leave you now," said he, addressing himself to Philip; "but you had better lie where you are, for an hour; and then you can walk gently home, and keep yourself quiet till I see you again."

Even when they were alone she was so alarmed at the thoughts of what she might

have to learn, that Rachel could not at first break silence.

"What's the matter, mother!" said Philip, looking at her with some surprise. "Sure, you may believe Mr. Blackburn!"

"How did it happen?" at length gasped out the old woman.

"It's a blow that Wybrow gave me," answered he. "We had had a bit of a quarrel, and he came behind me and gave me a savage blow on the head, with a bludgeon."

"Oh, my God! I thought so!" exclaimed Rachel, flinging up her arms in despair.

"I believe he meant to kill me," continued Philip; "and if I hadn't had a pretty hard skull, he'd have done it, I fancy."

"And what followed next?" inquired Rachel, with trembling lips.

"I don't know very well," answered Philip. "Walsh and Harding found me lying in the lane where it happened, and brought me here; but Mr. Blackburn was away to Colston, and

the assistant was doubtful what to do; and so they carried me to Seton's close by, and there I came to myself in time—but I mustn't talk so much, mother," he added, turning paler than before.

"One more question—one more," said Rachel, eagerly bending over him to catch his words, for it was not the apprehension of his present danger that terrified her—in that respect, she was content to risk something for an immediate answer. "Did you strike Wybrow?"

"No, I had no time to do it," answered Philip, speaking with difficulty; whilst his head, which he had partly lifted, fell back, and he became once more insensible. But Rachel was herself again; for she entirely believed him, however much appearances seemed to contradict his assertion; and having by means of the appliances that were at hand, somewhat revived this beloved son, she bade him remain quietly where he was till she

returned; and immediately quitted the room in search of the surgeon, who was just then making his toilet; but presently attended her.

"This is a very awkward coincidence," said he, looking at her gravely, when he had heard her story.

"It is, sir, and I was very much terrified indeed at first, for I was afeard they'd been fighting; but Philip says he never struck him."

"There can have been no fair fighting on either side," returned Mr. Blackburn, "for according to your account of the other patient, both wounds must have been given from behind."

"It must have been a terrible blow, sir, that Wybrow got, whoever gave it," returned Rachel, "and though I'm afraid he's dead, wouldn't it be better you should see him?"

The surgeon agreed to accompany her, after taking a cup of tea to refresh himself after his night's fatigue; and as soon as he was ready, she started with him across the

heath, leaving Philip to recruit his strength by resting where he was.

The young preventive man, with his dog beside him, lay on the hearth as she had left him covered by the sheet, on removing which Mr. Blackburn found that he was not dead, though in a condition rendering it extremely improbable that he would ever recover from his present state of insensibility. The first thing to be done, however, was to remove him to a more convenient situation for the operation he intended to perform; and the station being at too great a distance, he was carried into the village.

The sensation created in the neighbourhood by these events, and the gossip and discussion they gave rise to, may be easily imagined. That the young men had quarrelled seemed to be very generally known. High words had been heard between them late on the Saturday evening, and many were ready to assert that Philip had for some time



been extremely jealous of Wybrow, and moreover, that he had very good cause for being so. Then, the preventive men as soon as they heard of their comrade's fate, became extremely angry, and were loud against Philip; and in spite of one circumstance that appeared very much in his favour, the affair began to assume a serious aspect as regarded him, provided Wybrow did not recover, an event of which there seemed very small chance.

The favourable circumstance was, that a heavy stick, known to be Wybrow's, had been found near to the spot where Philip was discovered, with which there was every reason to suppose that the blow on the head of the latter had been given. But, then, it was suggested that Philip might have brought away the stick after assassinating its owner, for the express purpose of perplexing inquiry; as to the blow he had himself received, some people went so far as to assert, that he might

have procured it purposely with the same view, by hitting the back of his head violently against some hard substance; "And perhaps," said they, "he was not actually insensible when he was found, but only pretended to be so. All these notions emanated chiefly from the preventive men and their adherents. There were other parties who took a different view of the case. They admitted that Philip, as well as another man, might kill his adversary in a quarrel, but they denied his being capable of the artful contrivance attributed to him. Those who knew him best were the most stoutly sceptical on this point.

In the meantime, what was May Elliott doing? That was what nobody could tell; for she did not go to church, nor appear outside her door, on the Sunday; and on the subsequent days, her front windows and door which were towards the street were closed. There was a door behind, however, which led into an old orchard, belonging to Sir Law-

rence Longford; for hers was the last house in the village, and stood just on the borders of his enclosures: and some persons, curious in such matters, and prone to recondite investigation, took the trouble of making a little circuit, for the purpose of ascertaining the state of the back premises. By these enterprising discoverers, it was reported, that the windows were open behind; and that the girl whom May kept, as partly servant, and partly assistant in her work, had been seen twirling a mop at this same back door.

Certain it was, that she made no effort to see Philip, though he lay ill at his mother's for several days. He was not simply ill from the blow, though its effects were aggravated by his having been in a very excited state of mind when he received it; but the moral conflict he had been sustaining for sometime, and the painful scene in which it had at last terminated, had otherwise deranged his health; and these things, added to the pain and

anxiety consequent on Wybrow's danger and the mystery that hung over the whole affair, had quite overthrown him. Even if Wybrow recovered, he was not at all sure that he would not accuse him of his being his intended assassin—very possibly he would think he was; and how he was to disprove it he could not tell. Besides, he was not long left in ignorance of the reports that were circulated to his disadvantage; and he felt so painfully that he was lying under suspicion, that he told his mother he should “have no peace till he went and gave himself up to a magistrate.”

Of course, betwixt himself and her, and the friends that adhered to them, the question of who had struck Wybrow, was a constant subject of discussion. That he had been very active lately in tracing some clue, which he expected would lead him to the discovery of the smugglers, Philip was aware; and it might have been in the pursuit of them that

he had fallen into danger. With respect to the injury he had received himself, he could suppose no other, than that Wybrow had inflicted it. They had quarrelled, and May had been the cause of the quarrel. Dissatisfied with the evident alienation, which she could not but perceive on the part of Philip, instead of seeking to recover his affections by reforming her errors, she sought to re-animate his passion by exciting his jealousy. This is the ordinary expedient of foolish women, who do not perceive that the frequent administration of this sort of stimulant, is apt to produce a very sedative effect. They blow the fire till they put it out. On the Saturday evening in question, Philip had gone to spend an hour or two with his mistress, before he went to his mother's; determined to represent to her the crisis they were approaching, which must either terminate their connexion or unite them for ever. He had maturely deliberated on what he should say to her, and going

charged with this thought, was naturally very much annoyed at finding her *tête-à-tête* with Wybrow. Formerly, the young sailor used to give place to Philip, as the accepted lover; but now he not only occupied a chair by May, which kept Philip at a distance from her; but he seemed determined to sit him out; whilst she, instead of evincing her disapprobation, took care to let her lover see that she enjoyed his discomfiture; and Wybrow partly with the view of recommending himself to her, by braving his rival's wrath; and partly because his natural recklessness was a little augmented by a few extra glasses which he had been taking, for the purpose of inducing another person, whose secrets he wanted to get at, to do the same—was foolish enough to aggravate the mischief by taunts and sarcasms, indirectly administered, but readily appropriated by an irritated man. At length, on the occasion of something particularly smart, said by Wybrow, at which May laughed

heartily, Philip suddenly started to his feet, and advanced as if going to strike him; but seeming to recollect himself, his arm fell; and taking up his cap, he hastily quitted the room. But this was going further than May wished; there was something in his demeanour that whispered to her, "If he goes now he returns no more!" and springing past Wybrow, she flew after him to the door. "Philip!" she cried, "Philip! come back and forgive me, and I'll send Wybrow away directly. Pooh! you're not offended?"

"Oh, no," said Philip; "no, not offended!"

"Come back, then!" said May, flinging her arms about his neck.

"Never!" replied Philip, in a calm, firm voice; "never. Lift your arms from about me, May, and let me go, before worse comes of it."

"No, no," she answered, passionately, for she saw he was in earnest; "no, no; I'll go this moment and send Wybrow away."

You go into the other room and wait till he is gone ;” and opening the door on the opposite side of the narrow passage, she tried to lead him to it.

“No, May,” replied Philip, firmly ; “I might go in there and deceive you ; but my last words to you shall not be a lie. It is all over, May ; we are parted ; I leave you this night for ever.”

“Oh, Philip ! oh, Philip ! forgive me !” said May. “It was all nonsense, all a joke, just to tease you—it was, indeed !”

“Yes, it was to tease me,” answered Philip ; “but if you ever win the heart of another man, don’t think he will love you for teasing him, May.”

“I don’t want to win the heart of another man,” said May. “Come, forget and forgive.”

“It is easy to forgive,” answered Philip ; “and I will not deceive you, I shall try to forget—not only your faults, but—” And



here his voice faltering, she thought he had relented.

“But my virtues,” said she, with her accustomed levity. “But you can’t, you see; so now come back, like a good boy, and I’ll go in and send Wybrow off.”

“Never!” said he, “never, so help me God!” and stepping from the door, he walked rapidly away.

## CHAPTER XIV.

## THE QUEST OF MAY ELLIOTT.

GILES LINTOCK had never been acquainted with the particulars of Lilly Dawson's history. His wife and her father had long ceased to hold any friendly or familiar communion with him; he took no interest in their affairs, nor they in his; and where he went or what he did, had no further concern for them, than inasmuch as they always lived in the fear of his doing something that might bring their names into disrespect. But, nevertheless, he had long suspected that there was some mystery connected with Lilly, from the importance Luke Littenhaus had at-

tached to her recapture. There was no appearance that the link that had united him to her had been affection; it must therefore, concluded Giles, be interest, though of what nature he could not guess, nor had he much curiosity to know. Since the night in which, by the assistance of May Elliott, he had delivered her into the power of her cousin, and received the stipulated sum for his service, he had ceased to think about her. He had only been waiting in London with a view to that enterprise, which being completed, he immediately quitted the city in pursuit of other objects.

Since these events had occurred, two years had elapsed; in one shape or another, Giles had been concerned in many a raid on the purses of the king's lieges in the interval. One favourite scene of his forays, in this kind, was the race-ground; and latterly, the only periods at which he was seen in the neighbourhood of his former home were the race-

weeks, which annually recurred. It was on one of these occasions, that, whilst watching the vicissitudes of a gaming-table, he felt himself tapped on the shoulder; and on looking round, he perceived Mr. Cropley. Giles fell back, and touched his hat; for, however little respected in his own class, Cropley was a gentleman to Giles, in his fallen condition.

"Lintock," said Mr. Cropley, "I have been wanting to see you for some time. Come this way, will you? I sent a letter for you, some weeks since, to your wife; but she said she didn't know where you were."

"No, sir, I don't think she did just then," returned Giles, following him out of the crowd.

"Well, I am glad I have found you. I want to speak to you particularly. You are acquainted with May Elliott—Elliott the horsekeeper's daughter—you found her out for me some time since."

"Yes, sir."

"Well, I want you to discover her for me again. Do you think you can do it?"

"I've no doubt of it, sir," replied Giles, who believed May still to be employed at Mrs. Knox's.

"Do then, and you shall be well rewarded for it. Have you ever seen or heard of her since that time?"

"No, sir, I only went to her on your business," answered Giles, who did not wish to diminish the value of his services, by intimating that he already knew what he was to be paid for finding out; whilst Mr. Copley, on the other hand, forbore for the present to inquire if he ever had heard of such a person as Lilly Dawson, because he wished to keep the whole inquiry in his own hands as much as possible, fearing, that if Giles got a hint of the important secret, he might anticipate him. So they parted, Giles promising to forward the desired information without delay.

For this purpose, it being understood his expenses were to be paid, he took the opportunity of an excursion to London, though he had no doubt at the time that a letter addressed to Mrs. Knox's would have answered the same end. But to his surprise, on his arrival he found that he should have to earn his money more honestly than he had anticipated. May Elliott had disappeared, leaving no clue whereby to track her flight.

At her first lodging, the woman said that she had left a trunk full of clothes as security for the part of her rent that remained unpaid, promising to send the money, and redeem the things. At the second lodging she had been less considerate ; for she had left nothing whatever. She had removed much of her property, which consisted wholly of articles of dress, by degrees, and unobserved ; and on the last day a man had fetched away a large trunk, on the plea that he was going to repair it. In the evening she had walked

out, and never returned. Further they knew not, and the angry woman said she "Only wished she could catch her!"

This was perplexing—and Giles, having interrogated the young girls at Mrs. Knox's, and every body he could hear of as likely to give him the desired information, was at a loss in what manner to direct his inquiries, when he was advised by Mrs. Knox to call at Harvey's and Graham's, and ask for Mr. Ferdinand Pycroft.

"He's attached to the feather and flower department, in the inner shop," said she, "and he's a very genteel young man, and I know May had an inkling to him. Indeed, to say the truth, when she disappeared in that strange manner, I thought they had gone off together; and I went to Harvey's and Graham's to inquire, for she was a great loss to me. Mr. Ferdinand pretended he knew nothing about her; but he looked as if he wasn't speaking the truth, and I've a great notion that he does. At all events, you can try."

So Giles went, and Mr. Ferdinand answered him exactly as Mrs. Knox had described; declaring he did not know where she was, but allowing his looks to contradict his words. The truth was, that he was as ignorant of her proceedings as other people were; but he had no objection to its being supposed that the lady had fled from the world and her friends for love of him.

"But it's no joke that I am come about, I assure you," said Giles, "and if you've any regard for May Elliott, you had better tell me where she is, or how a letter can be sent to her."

Mr. Ferdinand swore that he had an immense regard for her, but 'pon honour he did not know the lady's address.

"It's something very much to her advantage, I assure you," said Giles, at a venture, "and very much to the advantage of



any gentleman that might be connected with her."

"I wish I knew," replied Mr. Ferdinand, with more appearance of sincerity than he had spoken before.

"But you do know?" said Giles.

"I don't, upon my soul!" said Mr. Ferdinand—"but my idear is, that she's gone off with a young feller that used to be follering her about, that she called *Philip*; but who Philip was, or where he came from, hang me if I know!"

Having by further interrogation satisfied himself that this was really all Mr. Ferdinand could tell him, Giles returned to the lodgings, where he easily ascertained that a young man, so called, had been in the constant habit of visiting her. Moreover, the landlady in Blenheim Street seemed to entertain the same suspicion as the shopman.

"That young man, sir, went away to the

country, and it's my belief that she went after him. The last evening he was ever here, the girl that lived with me then, told me that she heard them talking about it; and that Miss Elliott never went to bed that night, but lay on the sofa crying, and there she found her asleep in the morning."

"And what was his name besides Philip?" inquired Giles.

"Well, I never heard his name," answered the woman, "but there's a book here that she left behind her, that the maid said was his—and there's a name in it. This is it," said she, taking a book off a shelf—"it's 'Gulliver's Travels,' you see, and there's 'P. Dewar, Castle Street,' in it. Well, sir, when she went off in that there manner, I went to Castle Street, and found the shop easy enough—they sell meal and seeds, and things of that sort—and there I saw an elderly, decent woman and a young boy, her son—but they

both declared they'd never heard the sound of her name for six months, and that they'd never seen her in their lives. A girl that used to go there, they said, had known her ; but more than that they couldn't tell, or they wouldn't tell, sir, Lord knows which."

With this clue, and the book in his hand, Giles proceeded to Castle Street, where he had no difficulty in procuring an interview with Peter Dewar. Of May Elliott, the boy knew nothing ; "But that is my book," said he ; "and it was my cousin, Philip Ryland, that I lent it to."

"And where is he ?" inquired Giles.

"Down in the country," answered the boy, "at Trentesy Mill."

Where Trentesy Mill was, and whatever else it was necessary to know, Giles found no difficulty in extracting from Peter ; and to proceed thither was his immediate determination ; not doubting, that wherever this Philip Ryland was, there was May Elliott also.

So writing to Mr. Cropley, that he had found the track of the fugitive, he proceeded to the coach-office, and, like his predecessors on the same route, he, too, started by the "Enterprise" for Hotham.

## CHAPTER XV.

## GILES LINTOCK VISITS COMBE MARTIN.

HAVING duly reached the end of his journey, and refreshed himself with a good breakfast, Giles Lintock started for the mill, whose sole tenant, when he arrived there, not a little to his amazement, he found to be his former acquaintance, Luke Littenhaus; for the correspondence that had passed betwixt them had been conducted with such peculiar precautions by Luke, that Giles had never had an opportunity of learning his real address.

The surprise on the part of the mill-owner appeared no less than that of his visitor, though of a much less agreeable nature.

Whilst Giles's countenance brightened with satisfaction, Luke's increased pallor, and the anxious inquiring expression of his eyes, denoted that he had no desire to renew an acquaintance formed under such peculiar circumstances.

"Well, this *is* luck!" exclaimed Giles, with what he designed to be a hearty smack of mutual congratulation on the hand of the miller, which generous intention, however, failed, from the lax manner in which that unwilling hand was extended. "Who'd ha' thought it?" continued he, unabashed by his cool welcome; "hunting a rabbit, I've caught a hare."

"What do you mean?" asked Luke, with a savage expression of countenance, and putting himself on the defensive.

"No harm, old fellow," said Giles: "I'm only joking. The truth is, I'm in search of a young woman, called May Elliott; and hearing that there was a young fellow in these

parts, of the name of Ryland, that she was fond of, I ran down to see if she wasn't here along with him."

"They're both here," returned Luke, much relieved. "But what do you want with her?"

"It's not I, it's Mr. Cropley, a lawyer, in our parts, that wants her; for what purpose, I don't know. But where's she to be found?"

"In the village," returned Luke; "they'll show you the house—she makes women's bonnets."

"That's she," said Giles. "What the deuce brought her here?"

"Exactly what you suppose, I believe," answered Luke. "She came after young Ryland; but she'd better have stayed away. He has got into a quarrel about her, with one of the preventive men here; and he's in custody for knocking out his rival's brains—or something like it."

"Well," said Giles, "I suppose my old acquaintance, Miss Dawson, is Mrs. Luke Littenhaus by this time?"

"I know nothing at all about her," returned Luke, drawing in again. "She's too cunning for me, and slipped through my fingers, as she had done before."

"The deuce she did!" exclaimed Giles, immediately anticipating the chance of earning a little more money by hunting her up again; "I'll get her for you, I'll answer for it."

"You needn't trouble yourself; I don't want her," returned Luke; "she's not worth the pains I took about her."

"Well, I always thought so," returned Giles. "But it's a capital joke, to be sure," and he rubbed his hands, chuckling at the idea of having pocketed the reward, though the object of his employer had failed.

Promising to call at the mill again, a favour



Luke could well have dispensed with, Giles next departed for Combe, to seek out May Elliott, whose cottage he easily discovered.

The girl said, Miss Elliott was ill and could not see any body; but on his name being announced to her, May's curiosity was so far excited, that she consented to admit him.

"What's the matter?" said he to her, after the first salutation; for she was sitting in an old arm-chair, in a half-darkened room, with her person neglected—an indubitable symptom of something being very far wrong with May Elliott—and a general air of depression, that he at once attributed to the situation of her lover.

"It's nothing to you," said she, "*you* can't help me. What's brought you here?"

"To look for you," returned Giles. "Crop-ley wants you again."

"He may want then," said May.

"But I dare say it's something to *your* advantage, as they say in the advertise-

ments," returned Giles. "You'd better go."

"No, I sha'n't," said May. "Not a step; and so you may tell him."

"Very well," said Giles, after some further vain entreaties; "I'll write and tell him so; and he can come and see you himself if he likes. I've found you; that's all I promised to do."

He then attempted to turn the conversation on Philip; and his present situation, as he had gathered it from Luke; but on this subject, she could not be induced to speak. He next tried that of Lilly Dawson, inquiring if she had ever seen her since.

"Never," replied May. "When I came down here, I expected to find her with her cousins; but I hear they know nothing about her."

"Where do they live, these cousins?" inquired he. "I saw nothing but a mill and a shed."

"They keep an inn about three-quarters

of a mile from there," replied May. "It's called 'The Black Huntsman'—a dismal place; and they're so uncivil that nobody goes to it."

"I shall go to it," said Giles. "I shall certainly honour them with my custom; for I must stay here till I can get a letter from Cropley; and that won't be till the end of the week, at soonest.

In accordance with this determination, Giles retraced his steps, and presented himself as a lodger, where he was by no means desired. However, they had no choice but to admit him; and there he established his quarters to wait for the lawyer's answer.

In the meantime, Wybrow was considered *in extremis*, and Philip, urged partly by his own feelings and partly by the resentment of the dying man's comrades, had anticipated the authorities, by giving himself up as soon as he was able to walk as far as the magistrate's house. His mother was, naturally,

suffering great anxiety, though perfectly convinced of his innocence; and May, the guilty May, was broken-hearted with remorse; and the consciousness, that be the issue of the affair what it might, she had lost Philip's heart for ever. Moreover, she was not equally assured of his innocence; she had had no opportunity of hearing it from his own lips, and having witnessed the feelings with which he quitted her house, that he should seek to revenge himself on Wybrow, appeared to her extremely natural. The moment Philip left her she had ordered the young sailor away, disgusted and angry with him and with herself; but with what had happened afterwards she was unacquainted, except from such reports as reached her through the girl who lived with her. From these it appeared, that the two men had been observed wrangling together, and Philip had been heard to use some opprobrious language towards the other. Be the particulars what they might,

however, well she knew that the fault was all her own, and that but for her wicked levity, for such levity is wicked, Philip would never have had a word with his friend, and she would still have been the mistress of his affections. But it was all over now ; and it was the struggle betwixt her pride and her love, embittered as the pangs of both were by remorse, that was rending her heart-strings.

Whilst these things were doing and suffering in the country by those who had been once so dear to her ; and whilst the General was fretting and Mr. Cropley was fidgetting because no tidings of her reached them, Lilly Dawson had been keeping on her even way ; loving and serving, hoping and praying, for she, who had always known how to love and serve where love and service were accepted, had now learnt to offer up the sacrifice of humble hope and earnest prayer, where these were rejected never. Docile, tractable, single-minded, and true ; and though without any

great capacity, yet with a heart that informed her mind, the two years she had passed in the house of Colonel Adams, had wrought an astonishing alteration in her. Her gentle and unselfish nature had always been favourable to her manners, but her ignorance had formerly been unmitigated. We are very far from meaning to imply that she was now an accomplished young lady or a well-educated woman ; far from it. Lilly was a servant, and she had no acquirements beyond what might have fitted her to be a lady's maid, or at the most, a nursery-governess for very young children. She could read and write with ease ; was clever at her needle ; had perused a good many books of various sorts, chiefly novels, voyages, travels, and light historical works ; her manners were modest and inoffensive, her person pleasing ; and she had an internal consciousness of God, and an innocent piety, little perplexed by creeds or dogmas, together with a reverent faith in the un-

seen, and an eager wondering over the strange and impenetrable mysteries of life and death, that made her walk ever holily through her daily path, enriching her simple mind with many a high, pure thought, and rendering her to those few with whom she could talk unreservedly, far from an uninteresting or unprofitable companion.

The person who profited most by these qualities and endowments, was Freddy. With Colonel Adams, she was rather a hearer than a speaker. She listened to his comments on the books they read, and occasionally asked questions, which he always encouraged her to do: to Mrs. Adams, she was only a very clever, valuable servant; to Winny, she was a pleasant companion and often an instructress; but to Freddy, she was more than all this—she was his friend and confidante; he told her all his own troubles, and all the family troubles; and she told him more of her past life and sufferings than she had done to

any body else, Winny not excepted : and not only their facts, but all their hypotheses and speculations, upon all manner of subjects, were freely communicated to each other. Mrs. Adams sometimes told her son that he made Lilly too much of a companion ; but his father always took his part ; urging, that from their peculiar situation, the boy lived more alone than he should do, and that he would never learn any harm from Lilly. So their fresh young minds were allowed to mingle ; and many a bright dream of the future Freddy would weave in his hopeful moods, in which visionary dramas Lilly had always an important part assigned her.

“ If papa wins that horrid law-suit, we shall be very rich, and I shall some day have a great fortune, you know, Lilly ; and then you shall always live with me ; and if I have any children, you shall take care of them ; won't you ? ”

“ Yes ; I should love them dearly, for your sake,” answered Lilly.



"Isn't it a shame my uncle's not letting papa have the fortune that Mrs. Adams meant for him?"

"It seems to me very wicked," answered Lilly.

"If my sister was alive, of course it would be hers, and we should never wish to take it from her; but it's very hard, when she was drowned, not to let *any* body have it."

"Should you like to have a sister, Master Freddy?"

"Yes, dearly, if she was a nice, good-natured girl. I've heard that poor little Isabel was very good-natured, and very pretty too; and she was so fair, that every body called her *Lily*; and I think that's one reason papa took such a liking to you at first, because your name's Lilly. How came you to be called Lilly? Is it because you're so fair?"

"I don't know, I'm sure," said she; "I don't know who gave me the name."

"Then you don't remember your papa and mamma?"

"No; I only remember having a grand-papa; but I don't think I ever saw him again, after I went to live with my cousins."

"Then you didn't always live with your cousins?"

"I don't know; I don't recollect," answered Lilly; "but I don't think I did when I was very little."

It was during a similar conversation to the above, that Lilly, who was walking in the little garden behind the house with Frederick, felt her gown pulled; and looking round, she saw Winny holding up a letter.

"What's that?" said he; "what does she want?"

"She wants me to read her letter for her, I suppose," said Lilly; "she can't read writing very well;" and, so saying, she followed Winny into the kitchen.

## CHAPTER XVI.

## A LETTER FROM COMBE MARTIN.

WHEN Giles Lintock received Mr. Croyley's answer, he was exceedingly surprised to learn that all this stir about May, in reality, regarded that very insignificant person, Lilly Dawson; and he now felt convinced of that which Luke's anxiety with respect to her had formerly suggested; namely, that there was some mystery attached to the girl, and he felt extremely sorry that he had not known it earlier; for in that case, he would have played his cards very differently. However, as it was, he saw a prospect of making himself useful; since it seemed probable that he was possessed of as much information with regard to Lilly as any body; and to this effect he wrote to Mr. Croyley, promising to lose no time in tracing her further.

The next consideration was, how to deal with Luke; whether to tell him the real object of inquiry, or not? And there was another question—did Luke, or not, know any thing about Lilly? It was difficult to say; for he might know a great deal and not choose to tell it—no one could look in his face without seeing that he was one who had heavy secrets on his soul—and it seemed somewhat marvellous to Giles, that after all the precautions they had used, she should have escaped again. But to extract a secret from Luke against his will, was a hopeless task; and from his reiterated assurances whenever the subject was introduced, that he knew nothing, it was clear that either the assertion was true, or that what he knew he did not intend to tell. But although Giles obtained no positive information from those repeated questionings, yet there was one valuable conclusion he arrived at—namely, that for some reason or other the subject was a very unwelcome one to Luke, whilst to the rest of the family it seemed one

of nearly indifference. That they were ignorant of all that concerned Lilly, he had little doubt, but that Luke was better informed, he was satisfied—and he began to foresee the probability of his being obliged to turn “approver” against his own ally. But wishing to avoid this in the first place, and also not knowing how far Mr. Cropley’s affair might be calculated to bear the light, he resolved to try other expedients before he resorted to one so inconvenient. His next step, therefore, was to commission a crony of his in London to call at the house in West Smithfield, and to endeavour to ascertain if any thing had been seen or heard of the girl after he had locked her up in the room and delivered the key to her cousin. The answer which reached him in a few days, filled him with dismay, and even with horror—for there are degrees in wickedness, and Luke had taken a much higher one than Giles. It was to the following effect :

“DEAR GILL,—The woman you want, according to date given, was murdered that same night, nobody knows how. She was found dead next morning. There was a great rumpus—I remember hearing of it—but nobody was nabbed for it, that I ever heard.

“I wish you wouldn’t send a fellow on such unpleasant errands! The people stared at me, as if they thought ‘I did it,’ as the man says in the play—and I shall take care not to walk through that street again t’other side Christmas.

“Yours—C.B.

“*Nowhere*, Nov. 20th.”

Giles’s opinion of his friend Luke had not been of the highest before—but this letter really astounded him—and he felt somewhat at a loss how to proceed upon it. He did not doubt that Luke was the murderer, and it appeared to him that he should be taken into custody at once—but these were unpleasant

matters, with which he did not like to meddle. Besides, he had neither authority nor proof to adduce ; so he contented himself with sending the intelligence of Lilly's death, with an outline of the circumstances connected with it, to Mr. Cropley; 'concluding his letter by saying that he should wait that gentleman's further instructions, and meanwhile keep an eye upon the suspected person.

Amongst the many disagreeable epistles that Mr. Cropley had received in his time, few had contained information more disagreeable than this. As regarded the unhappy fate of the young heiress, it was bad enough; but as it regarded the interests and credit of Josiah Cropley, it was a great deal worse. What would the General say? What would the world say? The former, whose pocket he had been picking for years, on the strength of this suit, which might apparently have been satisfactorily terminated any day, by a little more honest activity on his part; and the latter,

who thought him—at least, he flattered himself that a section of it did—the most diligent, acute, and far-seeing of the sons of Themis! He was so confounded, that, not daring to present himself before the General, he wrote to Giles, instantly to apply to a magistrate, and procure the arrest of Luke, whilst he himself proceeded to London, for the purpose of investigating the truth of the sad story, which he found too surely confirmed, both by the police reports and the people of the house to which Lilly had been carried.

Having then written to Mr. Treadgold, detailing the whole affair, and deferring to him the painful task of communicating the event to the General, he himself, accompanied by Ledbetter, a London officer, able in detecting criminals, and worming out their tortuous paths, proceeded, without delay, to the scene of action; and whilst he is on his journey, we will return to Lilly, whom we left just as she was summoned by Winny



Weston, to decipher a letter for her; a service which she had been for some time in the habit of performing with very particular zeal. The truth was, that Winny herself was an extremely indifferent scribe, and, until Lilly had become qualified to act as her amanuensis, her correspondence with home had been limited to a letter once a year; on which occasions she used to get a few lines written by whom she could; and in due time an answer would reach her, signed by her mother, to whom her own epistles were addressed; but written by the hand of no less a person than her cousin Bob Groby; who still filled the honourable situation of ostler, at "The Black Huntsman," old Deborah not being more expert with her pen than her daughter was.

It was by means of one of Bob's letters, that Lilly learnt some news that went very near her heart; namely, that Philip Ryland had returned to the country, and that he had a sweetheart in the village, called Miss Elliott,

a beautiful young lady from London; and that Mrs. Ryland was living in the old cottage on the heath, which Philip had repaired and furnished for her.

What strange news this seemed to Lilly! There they were all, who had been once her friends—all united and happy together; and she, who had loved them so much, was shut out from their hearts, and forgotten! She wondered whether all love was as hollow as theirs had been to her; and whether Freddy's would prove as unstable! She was happy now in her new attachments, but still she could not forget her old ones; and a secret instinct, which whispered her that May, who had been so false to her, could never be true to Philip, rendered her doubly anxious and curious to learn something of their proceedings; and Winny, aware of the interest she had in these letters, was very willing to gratify her. The correspondence became, therefore, rather more brisk. Lilly wrote the letters for Winny; and

Bob Groby the answers for Deborah Weston; but not the most distant hint was ever given to the old woman, of the name of her daughter's amanuensis and fellow-servant. So, that whilst Lilly was pretty well acquainted with what was doing at Combe Martin, the good people there were entirely ignorant of her fate, and had, most of them, ceased to remember her existence.

"Come here," said Winny; "here's such a long letter from mother; and I can read your name in it, and Philip Ryland's; do see what it's all about."

The letter, which was rather obscure, from the circumstance of the writer's habit of confounding his own personality with that of whoever he represented, ran as follows:

"DEAR COUSIN WINNY,

"I hope this letter finds you well, as it leaves me at present, except my cough, which

is worse since the foggy weather, and the rheumatis in my nee; but I must expect that at my time of life, which is 63. There's been a power of things happen here since I wrote last. Philip Ryland and Miss Elliott fell out about Frank Wybrow, the preventive man, and they fought and kill Wybrow, though he's not quite dead yet. Miss is in great trouble about it; and Philip's in prison; and Mrs. Ryland very bad with rheumatis and the trouble both together.

"You remember Lilly Dawson, as use to live up at the 'Huntsman,' where I live now, but shall leave, 'cause I don't like their doings; and I'd promised to tell Wybrow about some things, but he's dead, or as good as, so I shall say nothen to nobody, but keep out such doings myself. There's a man here come down from Lonnon to look for her; and they say she's done something very bad indeed. He's been to Miss Elliott and Philip Ryland about her, and axes Mr. Luke more

questions than's agreeable, and he looks as black as thunder. Cousin Winny, if you could get me a place as ostler in Lonnon, I would come up, or groom, to ride behind a gentleman. The washing from the castle's been very heavy lately, for the company they've had; and I'm quite lame standing on my legs ironing my Lady Albina's smocks and petticoats, and wish you'd come home again. Cousin Winny, if you can get me a place, as above, to ride, or drive, or look after osses, pray do, and I am,

“ Your affectionate mother,

“ Combe Martin,

DEBORAH WESTON.

“ Nov. 17.”

Here was a budget of news that filled Lilly with amazement. Philip and May had quarrelled, and apparently killed somebody between them—Philip was in prison, May in trouble, and Mrs. Ryland in sorrow and sickness. Then there was somebody

there seeking her, and there appeared to be some accusation brought against her. What could it be? The only thing she could imagine was that it might be something connected with the events of that fearful night she had passed in the unknown house. A paragraph she had seen in one of the papers some months before, had occasioned her some uneasiness at the time, because it struck her as referring to that event. It was to the effect that, "The hackney-coachman who had driven two women to the house in West Smithfield, where one of them was found murdered the next morning had been at length discovered ; but that he denied knowing any thing of the parties, who had taken him off the stand. He asserts that only one of the women entered the house conducted by the man who had engaged him, whilst the other desired to be driven back to where he had taken her up, which was near Long Acre, and that she

left the coach there after paying him his fare, and walked away."

This seemed to indicate that she was supposed to be dead ; but, on the other hand, the circumstance of somebody going from London to seek her at Combe, appeared rather to imply that she was suspected of being concerned in the crime ; and on the whole, it did not seem to her very unlikely that if there were any stir about Charlotte's death, Luke might endeavour to shift the guilt from his own shoulders to hers.

All these matters gave Lilly a great deal of uneasiness, and afforded her subjects for very serious consideration. She was not now the silly child she had been. She wished to avoid Luke as her enemy, and one who would give her annoyance ; but she was now aware that both law and custom would protect her from him, and it was therefore not so much fear for herself as the dread of being obliged to become her cousin's

accuser, that rendered her unwilling to betray her own secret or come forward at all. But, on the other hand, it was both a painful and a dangerous thing to suffer herself to lie under a suspicion, which the lapse of time might render it very difficult to clear satisfactorily away. Then Philip was in prison, and Mrs. Ryland in trouble, and altogether that which she had never imagined could happen had at length actually occurred, namely, that Lilly Dawson longed once more to behold that dreary Heath which she had hoped never to see again; and when she laid her head on her pillow that night it was not to sleep, but to ponder on these things.



## CHAPTER XVII.

## THE EXAMINATION.

THE magisterial functions for the village of Combe and its neighbourhood, were discharged by Sir Lawrence Longford and his colleagues, in what was called the LARGE ROOM, at "The Red Lion." They held regular monthly sittings, which were found quite sufficient for this quiet district; but on the 27th of November, 18—, they were called together upon a special occasion. Messrs. Cropley and Ledbetter had arrived, and Luke Littenhaus was to be brought before the justices and examined, with respect to the murder of Lilly Dawson; in

which crime he was supposed to be either aider and abettor, or principal. Amongst the witnesses to be called were the family of the suspected person; Philip Ryland, May Elliott, Giles Lintock, and also his wife, and her father, Abel White; who, at the General's desire, had accompanied Mr. Ross to the spot; these last having only arrived on the morning that the sittings commenced. The General himself was also present, very loud, very lofty, and very full of malice; his private idea being, or, at least, it was the one he chose to insinuate, that his grand-daughter's own nearest connexions had been, in some way, privy to her long, inscrutable concealment, and her final making away, in the hope of enjoying her fortune themselves; a nefarious scheme, which he congratulated himself as having completely defeated. Never was there such a sensation in the village of Combe before or since, as this strange affair created. The whole neighbourhood was astir; business was neglected

work laid aside; people were staring out of the doors and windows of every cottage; and the street in front of the "Red Lion," was so thronged, that the two constables of the district—very great men in their way—were obliged to exhibit their staves, and exert the whole weight of their authority, before way could be made for Lady Longford's carriages to drive up to the door. The magistrates themselves having ridden to the scene of action, their horses' heels cleared theirs without much help.

The next difficulty was to keep too many people from rushing into the room; which, after all precautions, was crammed to suffocation. Amongst those who did get in, however, was Bob Groby; whilst his mother and his aunt Deborah, through his interest in the household, of which he had formerly been a member, were privately admitted through a back door, before the rush from without had choked up the passage.

Of course, there was a great deal of push-

ing for places, and talking, and buzzing, and calling of silence, before silence could be obtained; but at length, all being reasonably quiet and orderly, the first witness was called; this was Ambrose Littenhaus, who presented himself with a countenance in which anxiety and confusion were very legibly written. There was also an air of considerable depression in his whole person and demeanour; and a wildness in his eye, which wandered inquiringly from face to face, as if in search of some sustaining glance or friendly smile; and "poor fellow, if there's any thing wrong, it's been his brother that's led him into it," was the general sentiment with which this appeal was answered. It was remarked that he never looked towards Luke, who, with the collar of his great coat so raised, that it almost concealed the expression of his mouth, sat motionless; and as far as could be discerned, with an imperturbable countenance, in the place assigned him.

As it would occupy too much space were we to give in detail the whole of the examinations, we must content ourselves with a succinct compendium of the evidence in general; only dilating on particular passages where it may appear necessary.

Ambrose Littenhaus, the eldest son of Jacob Littenhaus, formerly of Fowey in Cornwall, said, that his father kept a small Inn there, called "The Mermaid;" and that having been bred to the sea, he sometimes went out with the fishing boats; that on one occasion, he and some others had boarded the wreck of a large vessel, on which they had found a little girl, apparently about four years old; and that they had brought her ashore, and out of compassion kept her with them, as if she were a relation of their own; they had always told her she was so, considering it better that she should believe it to be the case. When they came to their present residence they had brought her with them.

She had always been very happy and contented; and when she grew up to be about seventeen, his brother Luke wished to make her his wife, and she had been taken to Hotham to be married, and they had been asked in church; but for some reason or other which they had never discovered, after having yielded her free consent to the union, she had run away; and though, alarmed for her safety, they had made great inquiries after her, it was a considerable time before any tidings of her reached them. They had at last, however, received a letter from a stranger, named Lintock, informing them that she was residing in the family of a solicitor in Exeter; whereupon Luke had immediately gone to that place; but found that she had disappeared from Mr. Ross's, and nobody knew what had become of her. Once again, they had heard of her from the same man, who said she was in London; and his brother had gone there to fetch her; but he re-

turned alone, saying that she had escaped again, and that he should take no more trouble about her.

On being asked if he had boarded the wreck with his father, he answered, that he had not; being at that time ill with a fever. Being asked if his brother Luke had been there; he answered that he did not know.

The evidence of Anna Littenhaus was, as far as she knew, to exactly the same effect as her brother's. It was not she, but her sister Charlotte who had accompanied Lilly Dawson to Hotham. Charlotte had since married a Mr. Locksley, and lived in London; but she could not tell her address.

Mrs. Ryland and Philip were then examined as to seeing Lilly at "The Black Huntsman." The old woman and her son both looked grave, pale, and ill; but their evidence was given with perfect composure and self-possession. They coincided in the opi-

nion, that Lilly Dawson had not been well treated at "The Huntsman;" she had been over-worked; and her education and her health neglected. Neither could they have considered her by any means happy. Philip remembered her being taken to Hotham. She had made no objection; she was pleased to have some change; and with respect to marrying Mr. Luke, he did not think she well understood the nature of the contract she was about to form. She certainly did not like Mr. Luke—she was afraid of him; but she was extremely ignorant.

Mrs. Hobbs next made her appearance, with Sally, her daughter, now a stout, ruddy lass; whilst the clerk of the parish, certified to the fact of Luke Littenhaus and Lilly Dawson having been asked twice in church.

Mrs. Hobbs confessed that she had advised "the poor thing to go out and fetch a walk;" for that it made her heart ache to see how she was shut up in the house, when Miss



Charlotte, her cousin, went gadding about everywhere. What had become of her she never could make out. She had never heard of her from that time; and supposed she had gone away "to get quit of the marriage." Miss Sally did not recollect much about the matter. She only knew that she had been playing with some other girls at "Thread-my-needle," when Lilly, who was to have taken care of her, went away and left her. She had never heard of her since.

Then came Abel White, the old blind pauper—blind and a pauper still, and looking much older and more broken, both in mind and body, than when we met him last. As the particulars of his evidence must be already familiar to the reader, we will not detail it; but the poor old man was exceedingly affected whilst he gave his testimony, for he fully believed, as did every body else, Luke Littenhaus not excepted, that Lilly was dead; and the thoughts of her lamentable

end brought the big tears from the sightless eyes of her aged friend. He spoke in the highest terms of her character and disposition, and dwelt in pathetic tones and language, on her gratitude and affection towards himself: whilst all he asserted was entirely corroborated by his daughter Martha.

Mr. Ross next related how Lilly had lived in his family as under nursery-maid for six months, and described the unaccountable manner of her departure, and the unfavourable suspicions to which that circumstance had given rise; adding, however, that his wife had previously been very well satisfied with her; but that they had always remarked that she wanted gaiety, and was extremely ignorant and inexperienced for her age. Jane Watts, who had been sent for by Mr. Crop-ley, next described the journey to London; and clearly accounted for Lilly's flight from Exeter; by saying, that she understood it to have proceeded from some alarm at the

prospect of falling again into the hands of her relations, who had not treated her well. A piece of information that exceedingly puzzled Giles Lintock, who, being a great man on the present occasion, and the ally of Mr. Cropley, sat there listening with considerable personal interest to the narrative: and wondering by what means Lilly had become acquainted with his scheme for entrapping her.

After Jane Watts had retired, May Elliott was called forward. Unhappy as she was, it was not in May's nature, on a public occasion like the present, to neglect her person. She was accordingly attired very elegantly, in a green silk dress, white Norwich shawl, and straw bonnet trimmed with pink ribbons; the whole worn with that good taste and grace, which were her peculiar distinction, and which caused a murmur of approbation to be heard when she made her appearance.

The first part of her evidence was simple

and straight-forward enough. She had become acquainted with Lilly at Mrs. Knox's, and finding she had no friends, had taken her to live with her. When the interrogatories turned on the mode of their parting, however, there was evidently some mystery to be cleared up. Lilly, she said, had confessed to her that she had run away from her friends; and learning from Giles Lintock that they were still in search of her, she thought it was the best thing for Lilly to deliver her over to them, especially as she did not consider her able to take care of herself. She had delivered her up to Giles at the door of a house where she understood her cousin was waiting to receive her. She had imagined he would marry her, according to his former intentions, and had expected to find her in the country. On the whole, she made out a tolerably good story for herself, which answered well enough for every body but Philip. When *he* heard that she had con-

fessed to having betrayed Lilly into the hands of her enemy, he was inexpressibly shocked; the more so, as he did not discern that she had been actuated by jealousy.

Then came Giles Lintock, who admitted all he had done in the business, making it appear that he thought he was doing no more than his duty, in restoring a runaway to her own family, who were affectionately seeking her.

At length Luke was called upon to answer for himself. He began by corroborating the story told by Ambrose, with respect to finding Lilly, and confessed that he had been with the crew that had boarded the wreck of the *Hastings*, but alleged that he had remained in the boat. He believed all the rest of the party were dead, having lost sight of them. He knew nothing of any body being found on the wreck, except the child whom they had brought away. Supposed she might have belonged to one of the

sailors. Her dress furnished no indication with respect to her condition, as she had nothing on but her night-clothes at the time, and was wrapt in a blanket when brought ashore. On being questioned as to his motive for desiring to marry her, he answered, that he had no motive but to afford her protection; and he had taken so much pains to recover her, because he considered her not fit to go about the world alone. He had always thought her rather weak in her intellect. With regard to the last time that Giles Lintock had undertaken to deliver her to him, he declared positively, that when he went to the room, he found the door open and the bird flown. He had himself then quitted the house and the town, and had never made any further inquiries about her. Wherefore she had returned to that room, or who had taken her life, he could not conjecture. On being asked if he were sure she was not in the room, he said that he did not

see her there, but she might have concealed herself in some closet, or under the bed ; he had not thought of looking since the door was unlocked. He had always supposed Giles Lintock had deceived him, in order to defraud him of the reward. Here Giles affirmed that he had delivered the key to Luke ; but that the latter denied.

Ledbetter, the London officer, then testified to a young woman, with fair complexion and light brown hair, being found murdered in the house and chamber to which it appeared, by the evidence of Lintock, that the young person known by the name of Lilly Dawson had been conveyed ; and that body, he said, had never been claimed. The people of the house, who were of the worst description, declared they knew nothing of her ; that room, and another on a lower floor, being taken only two days before, and the parties having all disappeared before the following morning.

Here terminated the first day's examinations, and various were the opinions with which the company dispersed. The villagers and people about Combe all suspected Luke to be the criminal; but the General expressed great doubts on the subject, and intimated that they had not got to the bottom of the plot yet. He, and Mr Ross, and Mr. Cromptley dined at the Hall with the magistrates, and from the baronet's table to the inn kitchen, nothing was talked of but Lilly Dawson, and her melancholy fate.

On the ensuing morning it was understood that the session would commence a couple of hours later than usual, as a witness was expected from London by the coach, whom Ledbetter had gone over to Hotham to fetch. Of the arrival of this witness Luke Littenhaus knew nothing till he saw him enter the room, and in spite of his caution, the effect of this unexpected visitor was very visible. He was a pale, sickly man, suffering from



asthma, and evidently on the brink of the grave, he wore a shabby black coat, which hung loosely upon him, and seemed to be buttoned up to his chin for the purpose of concealing the absence of other habiliments. This person was Laban Locksley, whom the London police had hunted up and sent away just in time for the occasion. He admitted that he had been acquainted with the Littenhaus family for several years; he was married to Charlotte Littenhaus; and well remembered Lilly Dawson, whom he had always understood to have been taken off the wreck of the *Hastings*. He had seen her acting as a servant at the inn, and had heard that she had run away because Luke wanted to marry her. He had expressed his surprise that Luke should have desired the union, but the latter had never explained his reasons—he, Luke, was never in the habit of explaining his reasons for any thing. Locksley had never seen the girl, to his

knowledge, for several years; but he was aware that Luke came to London to fetch her about two years since, and he had himself by Luke's desire taken rooms in West Smithfield, to which place she was to be conveyed. He had himself only remained there two nights, and had left very early the second morning. His wife and he having quarrelled, he believed she had only been in the house once; and he had himself left the place secretly, for the purpose of getting rid of her, as she led him a very unhappy life. He had not seen Lilly Dawson on that occasion; but he understood from Luke that she was there, locked up in a room above stairs. Luke had told him so; and that she was asleep in the bed. He, Luke, had sat with him sometime, and had then gone up stairs, during which interval he had thrown himself on the bed and was going to sleep, when he heard Luke enter the room again, and rummage amongst his, Locksley's, things. He

did not speak to him, being sleepy. Luke then went away, and he afterwards heard him there again, washing his hands. He had been asleep in the interim; but the noise awoke him. However, he soon dropped off again; and knew nothing more, till he arose in the morning, when he observed the water in the basin was tinged with blood. Being alarmed, he had thrown it into the street and rinsed the basin clean. It occurred to him then, that Luke had murdered the girl, and this hastened him away. He saw nobody but a young woman, whom he met on the stairs—there were several people lodging in the house. He had not spoken to her, nor she to him. He thought by her appearance she was a shirt-maker. He had afterwards missed his razor, and he believed that Luke had taken it away. He had since inquired of Luke about the girl, but had never obtained any satisfactory answer. On being shown the clasp knife which had been dis-

covered amongst the bed-clothes, he could not say he had ever seen it before ; but a razor which had been found upon the floor, he recognised as the one he had missed. He had read in the papers, that a young woman had been found murdered at that time ; and he had never doubted its being Lilly Dawson. The motive for the act, he could not divine.

Here the evidence closed, and Luke was asked if he wished to say any thing further. " I only wish to say," he answered, " that the evidence of the last witness is false from first to last. He married my sister against my inclination ; and because he has treated her ill, and forced her to leave him, we have quarrelled, and he is taking this opportunity to be revenged on me."

Whilst the prisoner was proceeding in this strain, a murmur amongst the people was observed at the lower end of the room, and the magistrates called silence more than once ;

but the noise continuing, Ledbetter moved down, to inquire the cause of the disturbance, and soon returned, accompanied by Bob Groby, who, on being asked what he had to say, answered, that he believed he could tell who that clasp knife belonged to, if he were allowed to look at it. He thought it was one he had bought himself at Hotham, at Mr. Luke's desire; if so, the name of *Crane* would be found on the blade. He had bought it at Mr. Crane's, the cutler, in Fore Street.

On examination, the name was there; and this circumstance seemed so clearly to bring the crime home to Luke, that not one in the room entertained a doubt of his guilt; he, however, declared that he had long lost the knife, and that he had always suspected Locksley of having stolen it.

It was whilst he was standing in front of the Bench, making this defence, that a door, situated immediately behind where the magistrates sat, was gently opened—it was the one

at which they, and afterwards the witnesses, had entered—and there appeared at it a tall gentlemanly-looking man, wearing a blue military coat, and a green shade over his eyes, accompanied by a handsome boy about fourteen, apparently full of eagerness and animation. Suddenly Luke, the hardened and impassible, was observed to change colour—he stammered in his speech—his eyes stared wildly—he paused—his mouth gasped—his under jaw fell—his features became rigid, and he sank insensible to the ground.

Whilst they were assisting him and carrying him into another apartment, the two newcomers, accompanied by two young persons, neatly attired in dark linen gowns and black straw bonnets, advanced into the room, followed by several of the witnesses who had been congregated in the room through which this party had passed. Foremost was Abel White, led by Martha ; and behind came Jane Watts, Mrs. Hobbs, and her daughter

Sally. Over their heads were seen the faces of Philip Ryland and his mother, who, on account of their own unpleasant situation, remained modestly in the rear.

“What is this interruption?—who are these?” inquired Sir Lawrence.

“It’s Lilly Dawson !” answered those behind the Bench; “and the other’s Winny Weston!” responded those in front of it.

“And this is Colonel Adams, and this is his son,” added Mr. Ross. “Colonel Adams is the father of the young lady, whom we supposed to be dead!”

The sensation, or rather the uproar, in the room, may be imagined. Every body talked, nobody listened; and as any further explanations or elucidations were not to be expected under such circumstances, the magistrates rose and quitted the room, followed by all who were entitled to accompany them; whilst the crowd rushed pell-mell into the street, and gave three cheers under the windows.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

## THE CONCLUSION.

NEVER was so blessed a village as Combe Martin! What a gossiping there was that day! What a standing before doors! What a setting of arms a-kimbo! What a congregation of toppers in the beer houses! What toasts were drunk! What disputes! What arguments! What bets were made with respect to the true interpretation of this strange story! Had Luke Littenhaus murdered any body? and, if he had, who was it? How had Miss Adams escaped? and how had she discovered, or been discovered by, her parents?

These were, indeed, perplexing questions; all but the last of which, however, we think the reader can answer for himself, and with



respect to that, the solution is very simple. When the General received Mr. Cropley's information, he desired that no communication on the subject should be made to the adverse party, as he called the Colonel; and Messrs. Ross and Treadgold received the same injunction, and obeyed it; thinking it useless to agitate the father with vain hopes and agonising fears. But the General's influence over his wife, was not sufficient to keep her silent; and she whispered the thing to one or two particular friends, who confided it to one or two more, till at length, it reached the ears of an acquaintance of Colonel Adams, who immediately wrote and told him that his long lost daughter was surviving, under the name of *Lilly Dawson*; adding a few more particulars which rendered the identification perfectly easy.

What was the joy, we will not attempt to paint, and least of all Freddy's, who almost kissed the skin off her lips, and never ceased calling her, sister Lilly. The

next news that reached them from their friend was, that Lilly was dead, and that the General was gone down with Mr. Ross to seize the assassin. Four horses and a post-chaise resolve the rest of the mystery, and there was Lilly dining at the "Red Lion," with her father and brother, whilst the General was dining at the Hall; hinting, that he believed she was an impostor, and that it was all a plot of the Colonel's; and Winny, meantime, was telling the whole story in her own little home, to her mother, and as many as could crowd in to hear it; and Luke was carried to "The Huntsman" and put to bed, whilst Philip was conveyed to the prison from which he had only been taken to give his evidence.

On the following morning, the General started for London; determined, as he announced, to expose the imposition, whilst Colonel Adams and his daughter were closeted for some hours with Sir Lawrence Longford and the other magistrates. The

results of which interview were manifold. In the first instance, it led to a great deal of inquiry and investigation, and examinations of various persons regarding the Littenhaus family, followed up by a search of their premises, and the opening of the coffin, supposed to contain the remains of Old Jacob, the father of these hopeful children; and the final issue of all these proceedings, the details of which would fill three more volumes, was, that Philip was released, and honourably discharged of all suspicion; and that the Littenhaus people were found to be members of a dangerous gang of smugglers. It was also discovered that they had murdered Mr. Ryland, because he was in their way; and poor Shorty, Winny's sweetheart, because they imagined he was spying their proceedings.

With respect to the affair of Wybrow, it appeared that, after quitting May, Philip had seen him flirting with another girl in the street; and, enraged at his wanton trifling with the happiness of others, had called him

*a blackguard.* This had led to some further words, which, having been overheard by Luke, had inspired him with the idea of getting rid of both; a scheme which he had executed with his usual determination and astuteness. But he did not live to suffer the punishment of his crimes. The shock he had received on the sudden appearance of his supposed victim, had been considerable; that, however, he would have recovered; but when he learnt that it was the life of his own sister he had taken, horror seized him, and, monster as he was, he showed some traces of human feeling. He had not loved her living; but when, by the examination of the remains, the fate of Charlotte, as described by Lilly, was confirmed, the effects were so terrific, as to render it necessary to convey him to an asylum, where he finally terminated his most wretched existence.

It would be wasting words to say, that all who had befriended Lilly in her evil days, were kindly cared for, and placed above

want; especially Abel White, who had a comfortable cottage assigned him on her estate in Hertfordshire, where he terminated his days, peaceably, with his daughter and her children.

On the same estate, which was called Elmswood, Philip Ryland, to whom, after all that had occurred, the neighbourhood of Combe Martin would no longer have been agreeable, had a considerable farm given to him, on such advantageous terms as enabled him to prosper on its produce, and afford his mother a comfortable home.

When the bustle and confusion at Combe had somewhat subsided, and people had time to look about them, it was discovered that May Elliott was gone, nobody knew whither. The last we heard of her was, that she had married Mr. Ferdinand Pycroft, and that that name had appeared pretty frequently in the "Gazette."

But what became of Lilly herself? Lilly was now Miss Isabel Adams, with a father

and a brother, and a large fortune, and, of course, hosts of friends; but before she could be introduced into the world in her true character, much was required. What accomplishments were needed! What improvements in manners and habits, in walking, in standing, in sitting, in eating, in drinking; in every thing, in short, were indispensable.

For the purpose of supplying all these deficiencies, a house was taken in the neighbourhood of London, whence masters of music, dancing, French, &c., paid daily attendance; whilst an accomplished governess was engaged to superintend the other departments. But Lilly, though she liked very much to listen to the organs in the street when they played some familiar air, found Hook's lessons insupportably dull, and made very little progress with them. With respect to French, she felt considerable difficulty in fashioning her mouth to pronounce the words; and she suggested, that as there was such a number of English books that she

had not yet read, she thought there could be no hurry about French at the present. She would have liked dancing very well, if she had not been obliged to hold up her frock and point her toe, and execute her steps with so much precision. In her opinion, these particularities marred the whole pleasure of the exercise. Grammar, she thought a bore; and the "use of the globes," intolerable. Geography, provided Miss Vincent would describe the countries she named, and the way the people lived in them, she thought not amiss. On the whole, however, it appeared to Lilly, that the processes necessary to fit a young lady to fill the part of an heiress, were a considerable drawback to the enjoyment of the fortune. She found in herself no aptitude whatever for these things.

However, she hammered away at them for two years, supported through her difficulties by her affection for her father and her passionate love for Freddy, who, both, of course, lived with her; whilst the only plea-

sure she seemed to derive from her wealth, was in lavishing all manner of benefits and luxuries on them.

At the termination of these two years of wearisome study, Lilly could play an easy tune on the pianoforte, and could understand a very easy French book. She could dance well enough, and she was sufficiently educated not to *appear* ignorant; and this point being attained, it was thought advisable to let her visit her estates in the country, for the purpose of giving her a little change of scene and air. So she, and Freddy, and Colonel and Mrs. Adams, accompanied by a due number of attendants—and amongst them, Winny Weston, who was her own maid—quitted their house at Richmond, and started on their tour.

Lilly thought her country residences, with their green fields, and smiling meadows, and smooth lawns, and fine old trees, much the most agreeable appendages to her wealth she had yet been introduced to; but it grieved



her much to find, that she had three houses, all uninhabited except by servants; and she observed, that as she could only live in one of them herself, that it would be better to let somebody else have the use of the other two; but Miss Adelina Fitzherbert, who was paying her a visit, told her, that when she was married, her husband would require them all, at the different seasons of the year, for shooting, hunting, &c. But Lilly blushed at this suggestion, and said she did not intend to marry, to which Miss Adeline answered "Pooh!" and hinted, that she hoped she did not intend to be so cruel to her poor brother, Sir Everard, who, she must see very well, was breaking his heart for her; which astonished Lilly, who had not been at all aware of his danger.

At last, the course of their journey brought them to Elmswood, and what glad hearts there were to meet them there, may well be imagined. There was old Abel, with his blind eyes and shaking hands, leaning on his

stick, at the door of his cottage, when the carriage drove by; and worthy Martha, with her daughter, now a well-grown girl, beside him, wiping away the tears that stood in their eyes, for joy; and a little further on, stood Rachel Ryland, at her garden-gate, dressed in her neat widow's cap and white apron; evidently, ten years younger than when we last saw her. Lilly looked out, and kissed her hand; and her eyes wandered from the gate to the house, and from thence to the farm-yard; but there was no one else there.

So, on they drove, with their four horses, the postilions cracking their whips, and the servants following in another carriage, till they reached the lodge; and Lilly looked again; but there was nobody there, except the old woman that kept it; and so away again till they swept round the lawn to the front entrance, and there on the terrace were assembled the tenants, ready to receive their young lady of the manor. Amongst them there was one handsome young face

with a thoughtful pair of dark eyes, and rich brown hair curling over the clear, high forehead, and a half-melancholy smile upon the lips. The owner of it dressed in a black velvet shooting jacket and white trousers, stood modestly in the rear, looking as if he wished to see, but not to be seen.

And then there was a loud cheer, and Lilly, bowing to her tenants, was led into the lofty marble halls of Elmswood.

It was a beautiful place, this Elmswood; the finest and largest of her estates; and it was a great delight to Lilly, who had never lost her early acquired habit of rising almost with the sun, to wander through the glades and shrubberies, and rich pastures where the sheep were feeding, whilst the dew was yet upon the grass; and Winny was always her companion, for Miss Vincent, born and bred in London, could not encounter the fatigue of these matinal excursions; and the beloved Freddy was at Eton. Mrs. Adams rather disapproved of these rustic propensities,

and expressed great apprehensions of the effect the bright morning sun might produce on Lilly's complexion; but the Colonel thought she had been too much confined to her studies for the last two years, and suggested, that as she was to come out during the following season, it was desirable to fortify her constitution against the fatigues that awaited her.

So passed the Autumn; and when the Winter came, if it did not rain, Lilly still took her early walk, whilst the rest of the family were in bed, and her father pointed out to his wife how much it agreed with her. Lilly was so well, so bright, so rosy, so cheerful—and so passed the Winter; and the Spring arrived, and the London season drew nigh, and it became necessary to engage a house, and there was great talk betwixt Mrs. Adams and the ladies that visited her about white crapes and organdies, and presentation *toilettes*, and Monsieur le Roi, *artiste célèbre*, inimitable for putting in

feathers ; and there were interminable discussions on the subject of corsets and cosmetics, for, unfortunately, Lilly's waist, not having been early compressed, was too large for the fashion, and her hands had never recovered the scouring and scrubbing at "The Huntsman."

It was to be hoped, however, that all these things would come right in time, and in that hope preparations were made for the removal of the family to London ; and Miss Adelina Fitzherbert wrote that her brother, Sir Everard was anticipating the meeting with inexpressible delight.

One morning, however, a circumstance was discovered that baffled all their calculations and disappointed all their plans—Miss Isabel Adams did not appear at breakfast, and by and by, a letter was sent up, which had been left at the lodge, addressed to Colonel Adams, and on opening it, he found at the bottom the signature of *Isabel Ryland*.

"The life of a fine lady," said the writer, "does not suit me. I am not fit for it, nor it for me. I should be often forgetting my part ; and you would be ashamed of me, and I

should be ashamed of myself. Having had no habits of early application, I cannot attain sufficient proficiency in the accomplishments I have been taught, to take any pleasure in them; and I cannot sufficiently accustom myself to the society of people of rank, to feel at my ease in it. Still less could I ever think of becoming the wife of a person in that station—I should be constantly miserable, from the sense of my own deficiencies.

“For myself, I prefer the amusements and occupations of humbler life; and a very moderate portion of the wealth Providence has bestowed on me, will suffice for all my wants; whilst you, my dear father, and my darling Freddy, will spend with credit and pleasure the fortune which I have, by deeds now in the hands of Mr. Dalton, my agent, made over to you.

“Finally, my dear father, I love, and have long loved, Philip Ryland, who is now my honoured husband, and I never could have been happy as the wife of any other man.”

No doubt, every body was very much shocked; and Colonel Adams and Frederick

were, at first, a good deal grieved; but when they saw how happy Lilly was—Philip always called her by that name—and how well he merited her affection, they became reconciled to what could not be helped, and she and her brother were ever the dearest of friends.

How the courtship had been carried on nobody could ever guess except Winny Weston; but certain it is, that though Lilly had made a great many strange disappearances, this was her last. She lived a happy wife and a fond mother, and died at peace with God and man; and the simple epitaph that was engraved by Philip on her tomb-stone, ended with these words—

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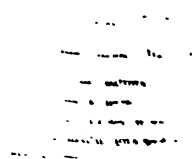
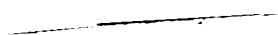
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